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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

DEPARTMENT BULLETIN No. 1433

Washington, D. C. September, 1926

THE OWNERSHIP OF TENANT FARMS IN THE NORTH CENTRAL STATES

By

HOWARD A. TURNER, Assistant Agricultural Economist, Division of Land Economics and Land Utilization, Bureau of Agricultural Economics

CONTENTS

	Page		Page
Need of specific information	1	Occupations of owners of rented farms	31
Methods and areas selected for study	2	How ownership was acquired	33
Concentration of ownership	4	Kinship of landlords and tenants	35
Residence of landlords and extent of absenteeism	16	Supervision given by owners to tenants	36
Women owners of rented farms	26	Tendency toward soil depletion on rented farms	38
Ages of owners of rented farms	26	Children of farm landlords	39
Farm experience of landlords	29	Summary	39

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Need of specific information	1	Occupations of owners of rented farms	31
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NEED OF SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Existence of a tenant class implies existence of a landlord class. The tenancy problem has excited much attention in the United States. Undoubtedly, a most important aspect of the problem and one on which little light has hitherto been available, is the question of ownership of rented land.

The special characteristics of the landlord-tenant problem in the North Central States made it seem desirable to devote a bulletin to the ownership of rented farms in that region. Not only is tenancy proportionately more important in many parts of the North Central States than in the Nation as a whole and increasing at a more rapid rate, but the system of tenancy has certain special characteristics which make the region as a whole somewhat distinctive in these regards as compared with other regions.

Tenant farms to the number of 679,426, containing 120,673,840 acres and worth $15,446,126,854, were reported in the 12 North Central States in 1919.[1] In 1920, 31.1 per cent of the farms of these 12 States were rented. These rented farms contained 45.5 per cent of the rented farm land in the country and 52.6 per cent of the rented farm land which was improved. Their value was 64.9 per cent of the total value of all the rented farm land and buildings of the country, but they represented only 27.7 per cent of the number of rented farms in the 48 States of the country.[2] If land rented to farmers who own a part and rent the rest of the land which they farm were included,

[1] The 12 States include Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas.

[2] The corresponding percentages in 1900 were 40.5, 49.7, 59.7, and 30.2, respectively.

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the relative importance of tenancy in the North Central States would be shown to be even greater.

The tenant-landlord situation in this region is also distinctive, as compared, for instance, with the South, by reason of the extent to which tenancy is a stage in the so-called agricultural ladder, the extent to which it is a method of farming deliberately chosen for economic reasons, the large proportion of cases of relationship by blood or marriage between landlord and tenant, and other characteristics.

The present study was undertaken with a view to throwing as much light as possible on such questions as the following:

To what extent is land ownership concentrated and has the degree of concentration been increasing or decreasing?

Where do the landlords live? Are they sufficiently near their farms to be able to give them their personal interest and attention, or are they distant absentees?

What are the personal characteristics of these landlords? How old are they? How are they occupied? What previous farming experience have they had?

To what extent are they related by blood or marriage to their tenants?

How did they acquire their farms?

To what extent do they contribute personal supervision and advice?

To what extent, in the opinion of the landlords, are the rented farms decreasing in fertility?

METHODS AND AREAS SELECTED FOR STUDY

A study of the ownership of rented farms was made in connection with the census of 1900.[3] Using methods similar to those employed by the Bureau of the Census in indexing the ownership of rented farm land in 1900, the Division of Land Economics and Land Utilization of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics has indexed the ownership of rented land located in 85 counties of the North Central States so far as such ownership could be ascertained from schedules for the rented farms enumerated in connection with the census of 1920.

From each schedule for a rented farm, the total and the improved acreages, the value of the real estate, the State and county in which the farm was located, and the name and address of the owner were transferred to a slip of paper. These slips were filed by county and by town in which the owner resided, and the owners resident in each town were indexed alphabetically. In this way, and to the extent that the name and address of the owners were ascertainable, all of the farms which any one landlord owned in the counties studied were brought together.[4]

In connection with the study made of conditions in the 85 selected counties in the North Central States, a study was made at the same time along similar lines of conditions in 99 counties located in other representative parts of the United States (fig. 1). The results of the study of all 184 counties are published in Department Bulletin 1432, in which it was possible to go into more detail in comparing condi-

[3] The results are published in summary form in vol. 5 of the Twelfth (1900) Census.

[4] Tabulations presented in connection with the census of 1900 show that 5.9 per cent of the rented farms in the North Central States were not indexed as to ownership by that census. Some duplication arises where a tenant reports that he rents parcels from two or more landowners, for unless an index card was prepared in the joint name of the owners one would need to be prepared for each owner. The former procedure would fail to bring all the properties of any given owner together and the latter procedure would increase the apparent number of farms indexed. If such duplication were not allowed for in connection with the index to ownership of rented farms in the 85 counties studied as to ownership in 1920 the apparent percentage of farms not indexed would be 7.8, whereas, making allowance for such duplication, it appears that 11.6 per cent of the rented farms were not indexed for ownership. The number of rented farms in the 85 counties of the North Central States studied, as reported by the census of 1920, was 92,728. When the ownership of 81,949 of these farms was indexed it was found necessary to recognize them as consisting of 85,472 parcels, of which 92 per cent were complete farms in themselves.

The population schedules were referred to in doubtful cases of ownership in preparing the index for the census of 1900, but this practice was not resorted to when the 1920 index was prepared.

tions in various parts of the country. To broaden the comparisons, somewhat different groupings were made of the 85 counties of the North Central States than those which appear in this bulletin.

To simplify the tabulations, the 85 counties in the North Central States indexed for ownership of rented farms in 1920 are handled as nine groups throughout this discussion: (1) Eleven counties in southwestern Ohio; (2) 11 counties in northern Illinois, the more southerly of which are La Salle and Grundy; (3) 10 counties in east central Illinois devoted more to corn and oats and less to general farming and dairying than the northern Illinois area; (4) 8 dairying and general-farming counties in the south-central part of the lower peninsula of Michigan; (5) 6 dairying counties in south-central Wisconsin, 1 of which does not touch any of the other 5; (6) 7 counties in the north-

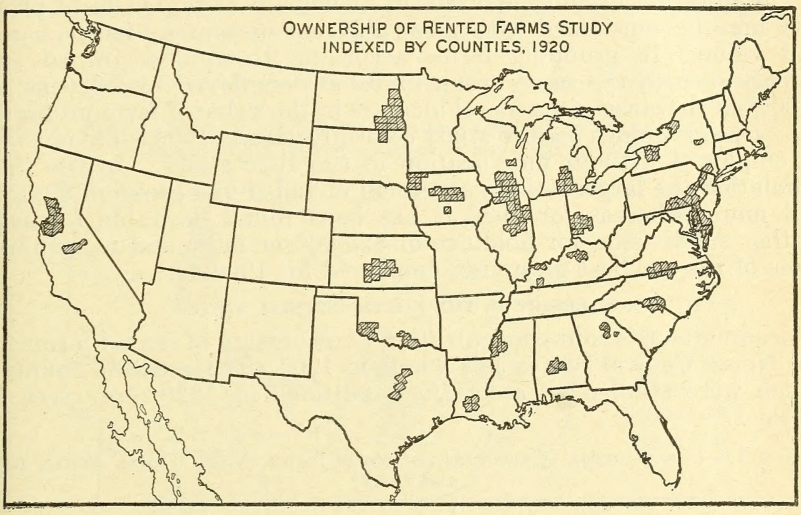

FIG. 1.—The ownership of rented farm land in 1920 was studied for 85 counties in the North Central States and 99 counties in other sections of the United States. The figure shows how the counties are situated with respect to one another

western corner of Iowa; (7) 11 counties in central Iowa, 1 of which does not touch any one of the other 10; (8) 10 counties in southeastern North Dakota with adjoining Brown County, S. Dak., making an area composed of 11 counties in which the production of spring-sown small grains is important; and (9) a group of 10 winter-wheat growing counties in central Kansas.

Valuable supplementary information of a personal nature was supplied by 14,300 landlords who answered questionnaires sent to landlords whose names and addresses were indexed as owning rented farms in the North Central States.

In considering the completeness of the data on concentration or ownership it should be noted that census enumerators were not asked to ascertain the name and address of owners of land that was not farmed. In their replies landlords who answered the questionnaires sent to them by the Division of Land Economics and Land Utilization reported the total acreage they owned, including acreages rented to tenants, acreages operated personally or with hired labor or managers, and acreages not farmed at all.

The fact that the counties selected for study are for the most part in groups of contiguous counties greatly increases the possibility that all of the land owned by each landlord is accounted for. It is obvious that the more nearly the index of ownership includes properties owned in counties adjoining the one in which the landlord owns one farm, the more nearly the index comes to including every rented farm the landlord owns. Among the 85 counties indexed for ownership some are entirely surrounded by other of the indexed counties, whereas others are half surrounded, others only a third surrounded, etc. As shown later, nearly nine-tenths of all the farms studied are owned by landlords residing in the same county or an adjoining county.

CONCENTRATION OF OWNERSHIP

The question of concentration of ownership of rented farm property may be considered with three different measures—farms, acres, and value. In grouping farms according to number owned and acreage owned, the same group limits are employed for 1920 as for 1900; but, because of a general increase in the value of farm property, the value groupings used to study concentration in 1900 could not well be employed without modification in the 1920 study. In the 1900 tabulation the larger holdings were all included in a group of $25,000 and more, whereas for 1920 it has been found desirable to make further subdivision for holdings of $25,000 or more and to combine some of the smallest groupings employed for 1900.

OWNERSHIP IN THE NORTH CENTRAL STATES

Leading facts about concentration of ownership of rented farms for the North Central States as a whole in 1900 and for the 85 counties which were studied to ascertain conditions in 1920, are given in Table 1.[5]

TABLE 1.—*Concentration of ownership of rented farms, North Central States, 1900 and 1920* [a]

Item and year	Total studied	Percentage distribution by number of rented farms held						
		1 farm	1 or 2 farms	Less than 5 farms	5 or more farms	10 or more farms	20 or more farms	Total studied
Landlords:	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
1900	474,894	88.42	96.66	99.20	0.80	0.14	0.03	100
1920	71,397	86.94	96.57	99.45	.55	.09	.02	100
Rented farms:								
1900	570,195	73.64	87.36	94.28	5.72	2.00	.76	100
1920	85,472	72.71	88.68	96.34	3.66	1.39	.77	100
Acres in rented farms:								
1900	72,928,715	73.48	87.15	94.25	5.75	2.11	.81	100
1920	15,012,820	70.47	86.79	95.30	4.70	1.66	.87	100
Value of rented farm land and buildings:	*Dollars*							
1900	2,633,833,027	71.80	86.44	93.98	6.02	2.13	.59	100
1920	2,903,038,994	67.48	85.20	94.77	5.23	1.91	.96	100

[a] The 1900 figures are for farm landlords resident in the North Central States and concern rented farms owned anywhere in the United States; the 1920 figures are for farm landlords owning rented farms in one or more of 85 counties.

[5] The census of 1900 in its tables showing how the rented farms were owned, gave the rented farm property in the United States owned by the residents of each State regardless of the location of the land owned. It is shown that 92.3 per cent of the rented farms of the North Central States were owned by persons resident in the State containing the farms.

In the study of conditions of concentration of ownership in 1920 the farms, farm acreage, and farm values mentioned in connection with a given area pertain exclusively to property located wholly within that area. However, distinction is made of owners and their holdings based on all rented property which they owned in the 184 counties indexed for ownership of rented farms, 99 of which counties are not in the North Central States.

In 1900 the landlords with more than two rented farms owned 12.64 per cent of the rented farms. They were 3.34 per cent of the landlords residing in the North Central States. Their rented farms contained 12.85 per cent of the acreage and were worth 13.56 per cent of the value of all rented farms held by landlords residing in those States.

In 1920, 3.43 per cent of the landlords owned more than two rented farms, their rented farms being 11.32 per cent of the number, comprising 13.21 per cent of the acreage and 14.8 per cent of the value of all rented farms in those States. If conditions in the 85 counties studied are representative of conditions in the North Central States as a whole in 1920, it is apparent that no great change occurred since 1900 in the number of rented farms in those States which were held by owners of more than two rented farms. The great proportion of the rented farms of the North Central States was owned by persons

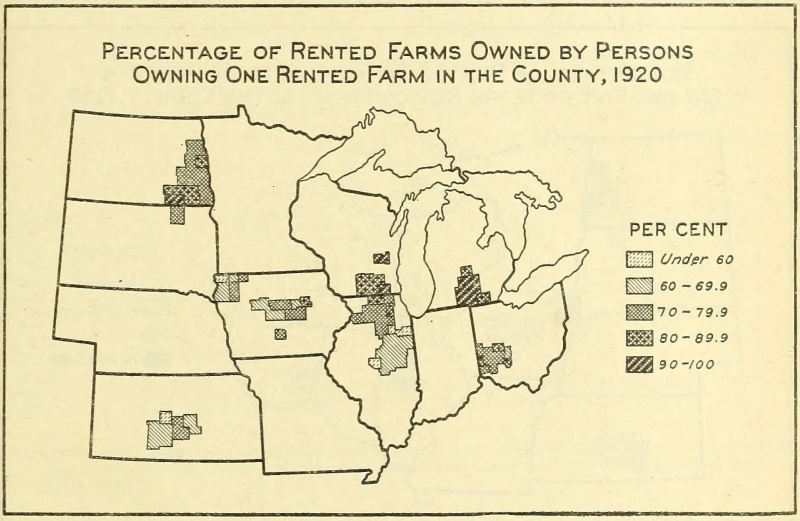
PERCENTAGE OF RENTED FARMS OWNED BY PERSONS OWNING ONE RENTED FARM IN THE COUNTY, 1920
PER CENT
Under 60
60 - 69.9
70 - 79.9
80 - 89.9
90 - 100

FIG. 2.—In 9 of the 85 counties over 90 per cent of the rented farms were owned by landlords who owned but one rented farm in the county. In a block of 11 central Illinois counties less than 70 per cent of the rented farms were owned by landlords who owned but one rented farm in the county

who owned but one rented farm, both in 1900 and in 1920 (figs. 2 and 3).

Replies of landlords of rented farms to a question relating to the number of tenants who rented land from them in 1920 indicate that the proportion of landlords who have more than one tenant is somewhat larger than that which is shown by information derived from index of ownership of rented farms. The results, however, are not strictly comparable. The landlords who answered the questionnaire owned more rented farms, according to the index, than those who did not. In their replies landlords included tenants who rented part and owned part, whereas the index excluded such tenants. Some landlords gave the number of persons in the families of their tenants rather than the number of their tenants and so tended to exaggerate the proportion of landlords who had more than one tenant. Other landlords may have included as tenants persons who rented homes

rather than farms. They gave the number of tenants on their land no matter where their land was situated. The 1920 index of ownership, on the other hand, is limited to farms rented to tenants in 184 counties of which 99 were not in the North Central States.[6]

In their replies landlords would naturally include farms and acreages rented to farmers who owned additional land which they farmed. Such farms and acreages are practically excluded from the index figures as stated above. For a group of 2,108 owners who had land in counties in which an attempt was made to index the ownership of rented parts of part-owner farms as well as the ownership of full-tenant farms, the rented acreage indexed was 92 per cent of the rented acreage reported by the owners in their questionnaire replies. The number of rented farms or parcels indexed was 73 per cent of the number of tenants reported.

On account of the increase in the size of the average tenant farm between 1900 and 1920, it is apparent that even if there was no

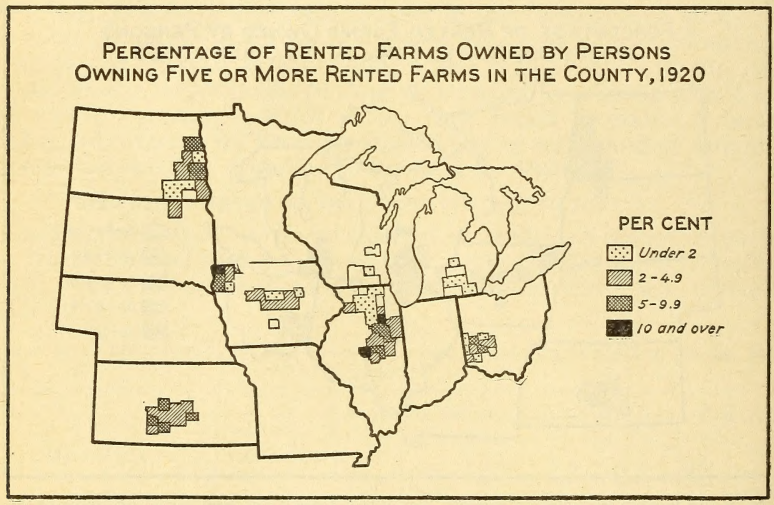
PERCENTAGE OF RENTED FARMS OWNED BY PERSONS OWNING FIVE OR MORE RENTED FARMS IN THE COUNTY, 1920
PER CENT
Under 2
2-4.9
5-9.9
10 and over

FIG. 3.—Relatively few tenant farms are owned by persons with five or more tenant farms in the Michigan, Wisconsin, and northern Illinois counties. There is a higher degree of concentration of ownership in central Illinois, northwestern Iowa, and central Kansas. The 14 counties studied left blank had no holdings of as many as 5 rented farms

change in the degree of concentration of ownership when measured in terms of farms owned there might be increased concentration when acreage owned is used as a measure. In 1900 the average acreage per tenant farm in the North Central States was 129, whereas in 1920 the average acreage was 177.6 for the North Central States as a whole and 180.7 for the 85 counties indexed taken collectively.

[6] Comparison was made between the replies of 7,095 landlords owning in the North Central States and the information about the holdings of rented farms of these landlords as afforded by the partial 1920 index available. On the point of number of tenants or number of rented farms owned the index agreed with the replies of the landlords in 66 per cent of the cases, being over the replies in 4 per cent of the cases and under the replies in 30 per cent of the cases. In 88 per cent of the cases the number of farms reported was either the same as the index or differed by not more than one farm from the index. The number of rented farms indexed was 69 per cent of the number of tenants reported by the 7,095 owners.

The acreage indexed as rented by these owners was 87 per cent of that reported by them in replying to the questionnaires, being the same in 32 per cent of the cases and about as often under as it was over in the remainder of the cases. In 11 per cent of the cases the indexed acreage was twice or more than twice that of the reply and in 12 per cent of the cases it was half or less than half of the reply.

The index indicated ownership of rented farms on an average in 1.02 counties, whereas in their replies landlords indicated that they owned in 1.27 counties. It should be noted that this latter average is based on the question: "In how many counties is your land? The answers included counties in which any was owned whether or not it was rented.

The parcels indexed for 1920 averaged 175.4 acres. For the 85 counties of the areas indexed for ownership, the average acreage owned by each landlord and rented to tenants was 210 in 1920, as compared with 152 for the landlords owning rented farms in the entire North Central States in 1900.

A fourth of the landlords of the 85 counties studied in connection with the 1920 census had less than 100 acres of rented farm land In 1900, 44 per cent of the landlords resident in the North Central States owned less than 100 acres of rented farm land. In 1920 a third of the rented acreage indexed for ownership in the 85 counties studied was in the hands of landlords with less than 200 rented acres. In 1900, 46 per cent of the acreage owned by residents of the North Central States was in the hands of landlords with less than 200 rented acres. (Table 2.)

TABLE 2.—*Concentration of ownership of rented farm acreage, North Central States, 1900 and 1920* [1]

Item and year	Total studied	Percentage distribution by number of rented acres held						
		Less than 100 acres	Less than 200 acres	200 or more acres	500 or more acres	1,000 or more acres	2,500 or more acres	Total studied
Landlords:	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
1900	474,894	44.06	77.74	22.26	2.96	0.62	0.08	100
1920	71,365	24.98	63.24	36.76	6.98	1.45	.17	100
Rented farms:								
1900	570,195	38.20	69.20	30.80	8.12	3.16	.87	100
1920	85,437	20.96	53.58	46.42	14.68	5.02	1.61	100
Acres in rented farms:								
1900	72,928,715	14.93	46.36	53.64	18.00	7.88	2.97	100
1920	14,987,608	7.17	33.38	66.62	25.84	9.56	2.89	100
Value of rented farm land and buildings:	*Dollars*							
1900	2,633,833,028	18.60	51.45	48.55	14.00	5.26	1.55	100
1920	2,902,471,207	7.68	36.63	63.37	21.92	7.62	2.37	100

[1] The 1900 figures are for farm landlords resident in the North Central States and concern rented farms owned anywhere in the United States; the 1920 figures are for farm landlords owning rented farms in one or more of 85 counties.

Between 1900 and 1920 there was an increase in the per acre value of farm land and buildings in the North Central States of 249 per cent, and on this basis the holdings of rented farms in the North Central States which averaged $5,533 per landlord in 1900, would have been worth $19,306 in 1920 with no change in acreage. (Table 11.) In the 85 counties indexed for ownership in 1920 land and buildings per rented farm averaged $34,450 in 1920 as compared with $22,734 in the North Central States as a whole. The average value of the holdings of rented farms in the hands of the landlords owning in the selected 85 counties in 1920 was $40,554. In view of the fact that the rented farms in the 85 counties studied in 1920 had a considerably higher average value than rented farms in the North Central States as a whole, it seems probable that the average holdings of landlords of the North Central States was something less than that for the 85 counties studied but still somewhat more than the $19,306 average which one might expect using 1900 figures and the rate of increase in farm values since that year.

In 1900 a holding of $25,000 of rented farm real estate was uncommon. At that time only 1.9 per cent of the landlords resident in the North Central States owned such holdings, their land being worth 15.8 per cent of the total rented holdings. The rented farms of those States then averaged only $4,627 in value.

The average value of the indexed farms of the 1920 study of ownership in 85 counties was $34,661. In a previous paragraph the statement was made that the average holdings of rented farms were worth $40,554 for the area studied that year. Of the landlords indexed 54.6 per cent owned rented farm real estate to the amount of or in excess of $25,000. Of the total value of the rented farm real estate indexed 85.4 per cent belonged to landlords who owned in excess of $24,999 of such property. (Table 3.)

Considering the 85 counties together, less than 1 per cent of the landlords of rented farms owning in those counties had as much as $250,000 of rented farm property in 1920, but the holdings of these relatively few landlords represented 7.6 per cent of the value of all the rented farm property indexed in the 85 counties.

TABLE 3.—*Concentration of ownership of the value of rented farm real estate, North Central States, 1900 and 1920* [1]

Item and year	Total studied	Percentage distribution by rented values held							
		Less than $1,000	Less than $2,000	Less than $5,000	Less than $10,000	Less than $25,000	$75,000 and over	$250,000 and over	Total studied
Landlords:	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
1900	474,894	13.69	27.79	63.10	85.60	98.10	(2)	(2)	100
1920	71,341	(2)	1.50	5.66	14.93	45.40	12.91	0.78	100
Rented farms:									
1900	570,195	11.85	24.37	56.23	78.56	94.26	(2)	(2)	100
1920	85,416	(2)	1.27	4.77	12.59	38.92	21.82	3.83	100
Acres in rented farms:									
1900	72,928,715	3.75	11.25	38.58	65.54	90.00	(2)	(2)	100
1920	14,995,822	(2)	.16	1.10	4.83	25.55	29.50	5.47	100
Value of rented farm land and buildings:	*Dollars*								
1900	2,633,833,027	1.29	4.93	26.38	53.19	84.21	(2)	(2)	100
1920	2,893,162,875	(2)	(2)	.42	2.08	14.59	40.63	7.62	100

[1] The 1900 figures are for farm landlords resident in the North Central States and concern rented farms owned anywhere in the United States; the 1920 figures are for farm landlords owning rented farms in one or more of the 85 counties.

[2] Information not available.

OWNERSHIP FOR INDIVIDUAL STATES AND SELECTED AREAS

Comparing some of the North Central States with respect to the proportion of tenant farms owned by persons owning three or more tenant farms (Table 4) it appears that, in 1900, 16.8 per cent of the farms owned by residents of Illinois were in the hands of persons with three or more rented farms, whereas in Michigan and Wisconsin the corresponding percentages were 3.4 and 3.1, respectively, the other States being intermediate between Illinois and Michigan. In the areas indexed for ownership in 1920 a larger proportion, 18.3 per cent, of the rented farms of the 10 central Illinois counties were in the hands of persons with three or more farms than was the case in the other areas of the North Central States, although in the north-

western Iowa counties the percentage, 16.6, was not far behind. The least tendency toward concentration of ownership is shown for the Wisconsin and Michigan areas. In the southern Michigan area only 1.4 per cent of the farms indexed were in the hands of persons with three or more farms. Examination reveals conditions in the various States to be about the same in 1920 as in 1900, due allowance being necessary for differences in the tabulation groupings and in the completeness of the index.

TABLE 4.—*Percentage of rented farm real estate in the North Central States held by landlords with three or more rented farms, 1900 and 1920* [1]

State	1900				State and section of State	1920				
	Percentage of landlords owning three or more rented farms	Percentage of rented farm real estate held by landlords owning three or more rented farms				Counties studied	Percentage of landlords owning three or more rented farms	Percentage of rented farm real estate held by landlords owning three or more rented farms		
		Farms	Acreage	Value				Farms	Acreage	Value
	P. ct.	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*		*No.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*
Ohio	2.3	8.8	9.2	8.0	Western Ohio	11	2.5	8.5	9.9	10.1
Illinois	4.7	16.8	17.7	18.6	Northern Illinois	11	3.2	10.3	11.6	12.0
					Central Illinois	10	5.6	18.3	20.6	20.7
Michigan	.7	3.4	3.6	3.6	Southern Michigan	8	.4	1.4	1.6	1.7
Wisconsin	.8	3.1	2.8	3.0	Southern Wisconsin	6	1.0	3.1	3.2	3.6
Iowa	3.9	13.4	12.4	12.1	Northwestern Iowa	7	5.7	16.6	17.5	17.2
					Central Iowa	11	3.5	10.4	11.8	12.1
North Dakota	1.9	6.7	8.2	9.1	Eastern North Dakota and South Dakota.	11	2.9	10.2	11.9	12.1
South Dakota	2.4	10.4	10.6	10.5						
Kansas	3.6	13.7	14.4	14.0	Central Kansas	10	4.4	13.2	14.4	14.2
12 North Central States.	3.3	12.7	12.8	13.6	All areas studied	85	3.4	11.3	13.2	14.8

[1] The 1900 figures are for farm landlords resident in the North Central States and concern rented farms owned anywhere in the United States; the 1920 figures are for farm landlords owning rented farms in one or more of 85 counties in the North Central States.

In none of the areas of the 1920 study was any important percentage of the rented farms in the hands of persons who owned more than 10 farms. (Tables 5 and 6.) Even in the central Illinois area, which contains a considerable number of farms belonging to the large Scully estate, only about a thirtieth of the rented farms are in the hands of persons owning 10 or more rented farms. Less than a twenty-fifth of the rented farms of the combined areas in the eight States were in the hands of persons owning five or more rented farms and only 27.3 per cent were in the hands of persons owning two or more rented farms.[7]

[7] An analysis of the questionnaire replies of 14,222 landlords who owned rented farms in the North Central States in 1920 shows that three-fifths, 60.2 per cent, reported 1 tenant, 82.8 per cent reported 1 or 2 tenants, and only 4.5 per cent reported 5 or more tenants. Less than 70 per cent of the Michigan, Wisconsin, and Ohio landlords reported 2 or more tenants while more than half of the Kansas landlords had 2 or more tenants.

102437°—26†——2

TABLE 5.—*Rented farms grouped by number held by each owner, selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Counties studied	Rented farms studied	Percentage of rented farms held by landlords owning						
			1 farm	1 or 2 farms	3 or more farms	5 or more farms	10 or more farms	20 or more farms	All farms
	Number	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	11	11,158	76.8	91.5	8.5	2.4	1.1	1.0	100
Illinois, northern	11	12,171	72.7	89.7	10.3	2.9	1.5	.8	100
Illinois, central	10	16,306	62.0	81.7	18.3	7.1	3.3	2.1	100
Michigan, southern	8	6,759	92.2	98.6	1.4	.2	.0	.0	100
Wisconsin, southern	6	5,236	87.8	96.9	3.1	.3	.0	.0	100
Iowa, northwestern	7	7,858	64.5	83.4	16.6	5.0	1.0	(1)	100
Iowa, central	11	11,207	71.3	89.6	10.4	2.8	.7	.1	100
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	11	6,867	76.5	89.8	10.2	4.3	1.8	1.2	100
Kansas, central	10	7,910	68.9	86.8	13.2	3.9	.7	.2	100
All areas studied	85	85,472	72.7	88.7	11.3	3.7	1.4	.8	100

[1] Less than 0.05 per cent.

TABLE 6.—*Farm landlords by number of rented farms held, selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Counties studied	Landlords studied	Percentage of landlords holding						
			1 farm	1 or 2 farms	3 or more farms	5 or more farms	10 or more farms	20 or more farms	All farms
	Number	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	11	9,638	89.0	97.5	2.5	0.3	(1)	(1)	100
Illinois, northern	11	10,235	86.5	96.8	3.2	.4	0.1	(1)	100
Illinois, central	10	12,437	81.4	94.4	5.6	1.0	.2	(1)	100
Michigan, southern	8	6,480	96.2	99.6	.4	(1)	.0	0.0	100
Wisconsin, southern	6	4,890	94.0	99.0	1.0	.1	.0	.0	100
Iowa, northwestern	7	6,164	82.2	94.3	5.7	1.0	.2	(1)	100
Iowa, central	11	9,355	85.5	96.5	3.5	.6	.1	(1)	100
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	11	5,892	89.2	97.1	2.9	.7	.1	(1)	100
Kansas, central	10	6,454	84.4	95.5	4.5	.8	.1	(1)	100
All areas studied	85	[2] 71,397	86.9	96.6	3.4	.5	.1	(1)	100

[1] Less than 0.05 per cent.
[2] Some landlords owned in more than 1 area.

The census of 1900 showed that a larger proportion of the farm landlords resident in Illinois owned more than one rented farm than was the case with landlords resident in any other of the North Central States. At the time about a third of the rented farms owned by residents of Illinois and of Missouri were owned by persons who owned more than one rented farm. Residents of Illinois who had 20 or more rented farms numbered 34; their rented farms numbered 1,115, averaging 139 acres in size and $6,414 in value per farm. There was much less concentration of ownership among residents of Michigan and Wisconsin, less than 5 per cent of the landlords resident in these two States having more than one rented farm in 1900. Practically 90 per cent of the rented farms owned by residents of these two States were owned by persons with only one rented farm.

The distribution of the ownership of rented farms by area and value must be interpreted somewhat in the light of differences in the average size and value of farms in the various regions studied. (Table 7.) In value the farms of the Iowa and Illinois areas were highest, but in acreage the farms of northwestern Iowa, the Dakotas, and Kansas were largest. The average acreage held was largest in the areas where the farms were the largest and the average value of the rented property was highest in areas where the rented farms averaged highest in value.

TABLE 7.—*Average size and value of rented farms and of holdings of rented farms in areas indexed for ownership, North Central States, 1920*

State	Areas studied		Averages for areas studied						State averages for rented farms	
			Acreage			Value				
	Counties	Location in State	All rented farms	Parcels indexed	Landlords' holdings	All rented farms	Parcels indexed	Landlords' holdings	Size	Value
	Number		*Acres*	*Acres*	*Acres*	*Dollars*	*Dollars*	*Dollars*	*Acres*	*Dollars*
Ohio	11	Western	107	99	115	16,398	15,529	17,978	105	13,243
Illinois	11	Northern	164	159	189	38,347	37,436	44,518	148	31,068
Do	10	Central	173	164	215	54,854	51,625	67,685		
Michigan	8	South central	118	116	120	10,551	10,633	11,091	112	9,504
Wisconsin	6	Southern	132	129	138	19,275	19,061	20,409	138	15,137
Iowa	7	Northwestern	192	187	238	55,315	53,952	68,779	167	38,898
Do	11	Central	167	161	193	44,595	43,099	51,664		
North Dakota	10	Eastern	406	383	447	29,828	28,445	33,152	429	20,713
South Dakota	1	Northeastern							368	35,869
Kansas	10	Central	272	245	301	22,198	20,021	24,538	252	16,835

The average size of the tenant farms in a given State or area also has much to do with the variation between States and areas in respect to the proportion of the rented acreage held by owners of a given number of acres. In North Dakota, where rented farms averaged 347 acres in 1900, 40.8 per cent of the acreage was held by landlords who had 500 acres or more of rented land. On the other hand, in Ohio, where rented farms averaged only 92.7 acres in 1900, only 8.4 per cent of the rented acreage was held by landlords who owned 500 rented acres or more, while similar small proportions of the rented acreages were held by such landlords who were resident in Michigan and Wisconsin.

In 1920, because of the increase in the average size of tenant farms and the fact that tenant farms indexed in the areas studied were somewhat larger than the tenant farms throughout the States containing the areas, the percentage of the rented acreage held by landlords with 500 acres or more was somewhat larger than for the corresponding States in 1900. In the Dakota area over half the acreage was in the hands of persons with 500 or more acres, in Kansas about three-eighths, in central Illinois and in northwestern Iowa about one-fourth. (Table 8.)

TABLE 8.—*Extent to which rented farms in the North Central States were owned by landlords with 500 or more rented acres, 1900 and 1920*

States and areas studied			Holdings of 500 or more rented acres			
State	Number and location of counties	Average size of tenant farms	Owners	Farms	Acreage	Value
		Acres	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
1900 [1]						
Ohio	All	92.7	1.1	3.8	8.4	6.4
Illinois	All	122.2	3.4	10.7	19.8	17.9
Michigan	All	95.0	.8	1.9	6.1	4.3
Wisconsin	All	126.9	1.5	2.5	8.6	5.0
Iowa	All	145.8	3.2	8.8	15.5	13.5
North Dakota	All	347.0	15.5	21.1	40.8	40.0
South Dakota	All	299.1	13.4	21.2	38.9	28.8
Kansas	All	165.0	4.6	11.2	24.8	17.2
12 North Central States	All	129.0	3.0	8.1	18.0	14.0
1920 [2]						
Ohio	11 western	105.1	1.4	4.2	9.4	9.4
Illinois	11 northern	164.4	4.4	11.2	15.6	15.5
Illinois	10 central	172.8	7.3	19.3	25.4	24.8
Michigan	8 southern	118.1	.7	1.5	3.5	3.8
Wisconsin	6 southern	132.2	1.0	2.2	4.1	3.5
Iowa	7 northwestern	191.8	8.9	20.4	25.1	24.2
Iowa	11 central	166.9	5.2	11.7	16.5	16.5
North and South Dakota	11 eastern	420.1	25.7	35.2	50.4	49.1
Kansas	10 central	272.4	14.8	25.8	38.3	34.7
All areas studied	85 counties	181.7	7.0	14.7	25.8	21.9

[1] The 1900 figures are for farm landlords resident in the named States, but concern indexed rented farms owned anywhere in the United States.

[2] The 1920 figures are for farm landlords owning in the 85 counties studied and concern rented farm property in the 85 counties.

As shown in Tables 9 and 10, 9.6 per cent of the total area of the farms indexed was owned by landlords of not less than 1,000 acres, comprising 1.4 per cent of the total number of landlords, and ranging from 0.5 per cent of the rented acreage in southern Wisconsin to 16.5 per cent in central Kansas and 20.3 per cent in the Dakota area. Except in the Dakota area, more than half of the rented land was owned by landlords having 100 to 500 acres of rented land.

TABLE 9.—*Rented acreage grouped by acreage held by each owner, selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Counties studied	Rented acreage studied	Percentage of rented acres held by landlords owning—					
			Less than 100 acres	Less than 200 acres	200 acres or more	1,000 acres or more	2,500 acres or more	All acreage studied
	Number	*1,000 acres*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	11	1,103	25.2	62.1	37.9	3.1	1.7	100
Illinois, northern	11	1,932	7.2	41.3	58.7	4.4	1.2	100
Illinois, central	10	2,664	6.1	32.7	67.3	10.2	4.2	100
Michigan, southern	8	773	23.8	71.0	29.0	.6	0	100
Wisconsin, southern	6	673	14.9	61.8	38.2	.5	0	100
Iowa, northwestern	7	1,466	3.0	30.3	69.7	7.3	1.0	100
Iowa, central	11	1,806	6.8	39.0	61.0	3.9	.6	100
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	11	2,630	.2	6.0	94.0	20.3	6.2	100
Kansas, central	10	1,940	2.0	19.6	80.4	16.5	4.6	100
All areas studied	85	14,987	7.2	33.4	66.6	9.6	2.9	100

TABLE 10.—*Farm landlords by number of rented acres held, selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Counties studied	Landlords studied	Percentage of landlords holding—					
			Less than 100 acres	Less than 200 acres	200 acres or more	1,000 acres or more	2,500 acres or more	All studied
	Number	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	11	9,638	53.8	85.8	14.2	0.2	(1)	100
Illinois, northern	11	10,230	20.7	65.2	34.8	.6	0.1	100
Illinois, central	10	12,421	20.7	60.0	40.0	1.5	.2	100
Michigan, southern	8	6,476	45.3	87.2	12.8	.1	0	100
Wisconsin, southern	6	4,890	34.2	80.8	19.2	.1	0	100
Iowa, northwestern	7	6,162	11.0	53.7	46.3	1.9	.2	100
Iowa, central	11	9,354	20.8	63.5	36.5	.9	.1	100
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	11	5,892	1.5	17.5	82.5	5.6	.7	100
Kansas, central	10	6,450	9.7	44.3	55.7	4.3	.6	100
All areas studied	85	[2] 71,365	25.0	63.2	36.8	1.4	.2	100

[1] Less than 0.05 per cent. [2] Some landlords owned in more than 1 area.

The comparative groups of holdings classified by value have also been largely affected by the great change in the price of land from 1900 to 1920. For instance, farm land and buildings in Illinois increased in value at a rate such as to make the average holdings of rented farm real estate in Illinois increase from $9,142 in 1900 to $31,854 in 1920. These are State averages and landlords of the northern and central counties would own holdings of somewhat greater value, because farms in such counties are worth considerably more on the average than they are in the State as a whole. The holdings of rented farms in the hands of landlords owning in an area consisting of 11 northern Illinois counties averaged $44,518 in value in 1920, and the comparable figure for landlords owning in an area consisting of 10 central Illinois counties was $67,685. Table 11 affords information of a like nature for other States.

TABLE 11.—*Average value of holdings of rented farms, North Central States, 1900 and 1920*

State	Areas in which 1920 holdings were studied		Ratio of value per acre of farm land with buildings in 1920 to same in 1900 [1]	Average value of holdings of rented farms or parcels of farms		
	Location	Counties		1900 holdings [2]		1920 holdings [3]
				1900 value	1920 value [4]	
		Number	*Per cent*	*Dollars*	*Dollars*	*Dollars*
Ohio	Western	11	267	4,617	12,350	17,978
Illinois	Northern	11	348	9,142	31,854	44,518
Do	Central	10	348	9,142	31,854	67,685
Michigan	Southern	8	228	3,718	8,461	11,091
Wisconsin	do	6	286	5,957	17,037	20,409
Iowa	Northwestern	7	524	7,512	39,386	68,779
Do	Central	11	524	7,512	39,386	51,664
North Dakota	Eastern	10	321	6,424	20,642	33,152
South Dakota	Northeastern	1	619	4,970	30,748	
Kansas	Central	10	403	3,673	14,812	24,538
12 North Central States			349	5,533	19,306	
All areas studied		85				40,354

[1] State averages computed from United States census data.
[2] Holdings of farm landlords resident in the named States and concerning rented farms anywhere in the United States.
[3] Holdings of farm landlords of the 85 counties studied and concerning rented farms in the 85 counties and not elsewhere.
[4] Assuming the same rate of increase in value as occurred in the State in which the landlord resided, using the change in the per acre value of farm land with buildings between 1900 and 1920.

When the holdings are grouped by value, a wide variation is revealed between the selected districts. (Tables 12, 13, and 14.) For instance, in the areas of central Illinois and northwestern Iowa more than four-fifths of the landlords owned over $24,999 of rented farms, but in Michigan, where rented farms average in value not far from $10,000, only about a twentieth of the landlords owning in the area studied had rented farms worth as much as $25,000. Of the value of the rented farms in the central Illinois area, 14 per cent was owned by 2.4 per cent of the landlords, these being the landlords

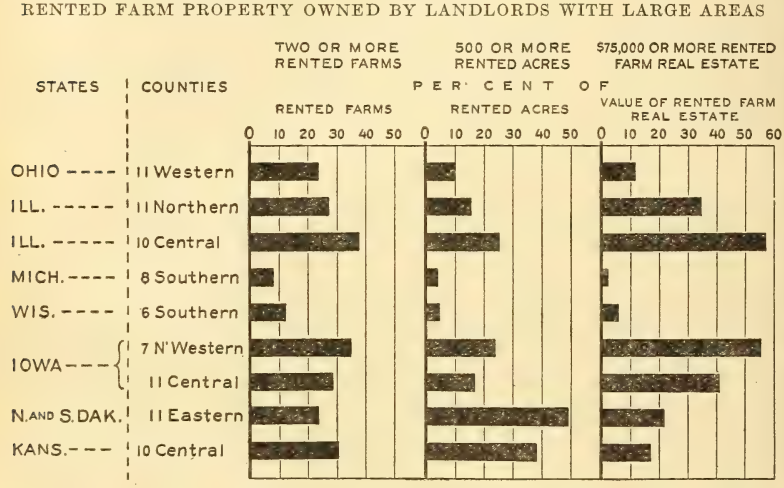

FIG. 4.—Great contrast between the areas is shown with regard to the percentage of value of rented farm real estate owned by landlords with $75,000 worth or more. In central Illinois and in northwestern Iowa, over 55 per cent of the rented farm real estate belongs to landlords with $75,000 or more, whereas in southern Michigan and southern Wisconsin less than 6 per cent of the rented farm real estate is so owned. Central Illinois and northwestern Iowa lead in the percentage of rented farms owned by landlords with two or more rented farms. The Dakota and Kansas areas lead in the percentage of rented areas owned by landlords with 500 or more rented acres

with $250,000 or more of rented farm property. In this area 57.9 per cent of the rented farm value was held by owners with $75,000 or more of rented farms, the corresponding figure for northwestern Iowa being 55.8 per cent, whereas in the Michigan and Wisconsin areas less than 6 per cent of the value of the rented farms indexed were owned by persons having rented farm real estate worth as much as $75,000 (fig. 4).

TABLE 12.—*Value of rented farms grouped by the value held by the individual owners, selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Counties studied	Value of rented farms studied	Percentage of value held by landlords owning rented farms in value totaling—					
			Less than $5,000	$10,000 or more	$25,000 or more	$75,000 or more	$250,000 or more	All values studied
	Number	*Million dollars*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	11	173	1.9	90.6	50.6	11.7	2.6	100
Illinois, northern	11	453	.1	99.4	89.1	35.1	4.9	100
Illinois, central	10	839	.1	99.6	96.3	57.9	14.0	100
Michigan, southern	8	71	6.2	71.5	16.1	1.9	.1	100
Wisconsin, southern	6	100	.8	95.3	51.6	5.4	.0	100
Iowa, northwestern	7	422	(1)	99.9	97.1	55.8	9.3	100
Iowa, central	11	482	.1	99.4	92.9	41.3	4.9	100
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	11	195	.2	98.4	77.4	21.7	5.1	100
Kansas, central	10	158	.5	96.1	63.3	16.7	1.7	100
All areas studied	85	2,893	.4	97.9	85.4	40.6	7.6	100

[1] Less than 0.05 per cent.

TABLE 13.—*Farm landlords grouped by the value of all rented farms owned, selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Counties studied	Landlords studied	Percentage of landlords owning rented farms with values totaling—					
			Less than $5,000	$10,000 or more	$25,000 or more	$75,000 or more	$250,000 or more	All values studied
	Number	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	11	9,638	13.2	68.1	21.3	1.8	0.1	100
Illinois, northern	11	10,235	2.4	94.4	69.4	13.3	.6	100
Illinois, central	10	12,400	2.5	95.1	83.1	28.5	2.4	100
Michigan, southern	8	6,484	18.3	47.7	5.0	.3	(1)	100
Wisconsin, southern	6	4,890	7.0	82.4	28.1	1.1	.0	100
Iowa, northwestern	7	6,162	.9	97.8	88.4	30.2	2.1	100
Iowa, central	11	9,346	2.6	94.1	75.9	17.9	.8	100
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	11	5,889	2.1	91.8	52.3	5.9	.5	100
Kansas, central	10	6,445	4.2	84.8	35.9	4.9	.2	100
All areas studied	85	[2]71,341	5.7	85.1	54.6	12.9	.8	100

[1] Less than 0.05 per cent.
[2] Some landlords owned in more than 1 area.

TABLE 14.—*Extent to which rented farms of the North Central States were owned by landlords with $25,000 worth or more, 1900 and 1920*

State	Number and location of counties	Average value of tenant farms		Holdings of $25,000 or more			
		Per acre	Per farm	Owners	Farms	Acreage	Value
		Dollars	*Dollars*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
1900 [1]							
Ohio	All	44	4,089	1.1	3.2	6.1	12.3
Illinois	All	59	7,182	5.3	12.7	21.0	27.7
Michigan	All	37	3,500	.5	1.0	2.2	6.2
Wisconsin	All	44	5,586	1.4	2.4	4.5	9.4
Iowa	All	43	6,210	2.1	6.6	10.2	11.7
North Dakota	All	17	5,746	2.0	4.4	10.7	13.6
South Dakota	All	14	4,213	1.0	4.8	6.4	7.0
Kansas	All	18	2,990	.6	3.2	6.0	7.4
12 North Central States	All	36	4,627	1.9	5.7	10.0	15.8
1920 [2]							
Ohio	11 western	153	16,398	21.3	28.5	45.8	50.6
Illinois	11 northern	233	38,347	69.4	74.0	84.7	89.1
Illinois	10 central	317	54,854	83.1	86.9	94.2	96.3
Michigan	8 southern	89	10,551	5.0	7.0	12.2	16.1
Wisconsin	6 southern	146	19,275	28.1	31.8	47.1	51.6
Iowa	7 northwestern	288	55,315	88.4	90.7	95.6	97.1
Iowa	11 central	267	44,595	75.9	79.6	89.8	92.9
North Dakota and South Dakota.	11 eastern	73	29,828	52.3	58.6	72.2	77.4
Kansas	10 central	82	22,198	35.9	46.1	60.9	63.3
All areas studied	85 counties	191	34,661	54.6	61.1	74.4	85.4

[1] The 1900 figures are for farm landlords resident in the named States, but concern rented farm property owned anywhere in the United States.

[2] The 1920 figures are for farm landlords owning in the 85 counties studied and concern rented farm property in the 85 counties.

RESIDENCE OF LANDLORDS AND EXTENT OF ABSENTEEISM

The extent of absenteeism on the part of the owner is an important consideration in the study of the problems of farm tenancy. Generally speaking the more distant the landlord's residence the more difficult for landlord and tenant to remain on satisfactory terms, to the injury of the farm, to the community, and to the profits of both landlord and tenant. Moreover, if landlords live near their farms they are much more likely to contribute in various ways to the success of the farm business and the upkeep of the property than if they live at a great distance.

Statistics which have to do with the location of rented farms in relation to residence of the owners may be used with less misgiving on the score of accuracy and representativeness than is the case with statistics which have to do with the extent to which the ownership of rented farms is concentrated in the hands of those who own the greatest holdings. The relative amount of absenteeism can be studied regardless of whether there is for each and every rented farm a knowledge of the total holdings of rented farms which are in the hands of the owners.

Residence of landlord in relation to rented farm land owned was first studied in connection with the census of 1900. At that time rented farms were separated into two groups according to form of rent paid, cash or share. For each group the farms concerning which the residence of the owners was known were further divided into three groups according as the owner was resident in the county, in the State but not the county, or resident out of the State.[8]

For the counties for which ownership of rented farms as of 1920 was indexed, no distinction was made between cash and share rented farms. Farms were grouped according to whether they were owned by residents of the county, residents of the adjoining counties in and out of the State, residents of nonadjoining counties in and out of the State, and residents of nonadjoining States. The second grouping is significant because frequently owners reside rather near their rented farm or farms, though in an adjoining county. Landlords who answered the questionaire gave further information pertaining to the number of tenants who lived within 3 miles of the landlord's residence.

In the matter of residence the post-office address of the landlord was considered in relation to the county containing the rented tract. It does not necessarily follow that a landlord whose post-office address is in an adjoining county, or even in an adjoining State does not live in the same county as the farm. This anomalous situation may arise in the case of a landlord living near a county or State line but getting mail from a town just over the county or State line. Contrariwise, a landlord who gets mail from a town located in the county in which his farm is located may not live in that county or State but just over the line.

A preponderant proportion of the rented farms, rented acreage, and value of rented farms was owned by residents living in the same county. This was true both in 1920 for the 85 counties studied and in 1900 for the entire North Central States. The percentage of each of these factors owned by residents living in the same county was about the same and a study of absenteeism based on number of farms would tell much the same story as a study based on acreage or value of rented property.

Of the rented farms in the 85 counties indexed for ownership in 1920, 73.7 per cent were owned by landlords resident in the county. These farms contained 70 per cent of the acreage indexed and were worth 72.3 per cent of the value of the farms indexed. The percentages for 1900 for the North Central States as a whole were much the same as the corresponding percentages for the 85 counties in the 1920 study. (Table 15.)

Farms owned by landlords resident in the county or in adjoining counties constituted 89.2 per cent of the number, 85.6 per cent of the acreage, and 87.9 per cent of the value for the 1920 study. For the same study farms owned by landlords resident in the State or

[8] In using statistics on residence one point deserves consideration, because of its tendency to bias the results. This is the question of the representativeness of the rented farms, the residence of whose owners is unreported. It seems very probable that a larger proportion of these farms unreported as to residence of owner are owned by landlords whose residence is relatively remote than is the case with rented farms owned by landlords of reported residence. The census of 1900 shows that of the rented farms in the North Central States which were owned by persons whose post-office address was in the same county as the farm, 32.3 per cent were rented for cash. Of the farms owned by landlords not resident in the same State as the farm, 38.9 per cent were rented for cash. It is significant that 38.9 per cent of the farms owned by landlords of unknown address were rented for cash.

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in adjoining States constituted 95.8 per cent of the number, 94 per cent of the acreage and 95.3 per cent of the value (figs. 5 and 6).

LOCATION OF RENTED FARMS IN RELATION TO RESIDENCE OF THE OWNERS, NORTH CENTRAL STATES, 1900 AND 1920

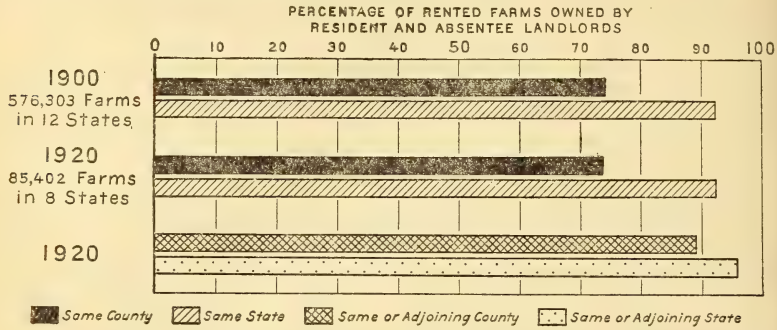

FIG. 5.—No decided change seems to have occurred in the 20 years which elapsed between the taking of the 1900 and the 1920 census as respects the degree of absenteeism among owners of rented farms. The 1900 census revealed that 923 of every 1,000 rented farms in the North Central States were owned by landlords who resided in the State in which the farm was located and that 740 of every 1,000 were owned by residents of the same county as that which contained the farm

RENTED FARMS IN SELECTED AREAS IN RELATION TO RESIDENCE OF THE OWNERS, 1920

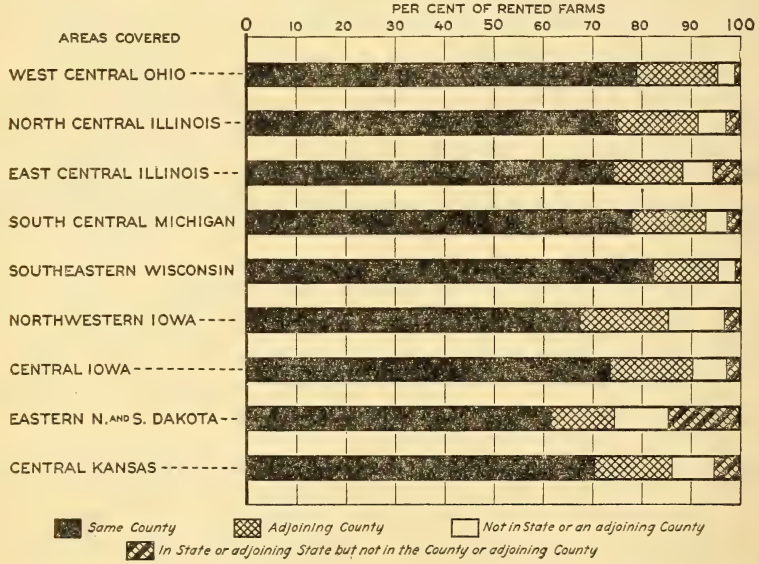

FIG. 6.—The Ohio and Wisconsin areas lead in the proportion of rented farms owned by landlords resident in the State or in adjoining States. The greatest amount of absenteeism is shown by the Dakota area, where more than a fourth of the rented farms were owned by landlords resident neither in the county nor in an adjoining county and where about half of these absentee owners did not even live in the State or in an adjoining State

TABLE 15.—*Percentage of rented farm property in the North Central States owned by residents of the county in which the rented property was located, 1900 and 1920*

Item and year	Rented farms	Area	Value of land and buildings
	Number	*Acres*	*Dollars*
Property in 12 States, 1900 [1]	576,303	74,202,436	2,695,391,083
Property in 85 counties, 1920 [1]	85,402	14,993,865	2,891,993,144
Percentage of property owned by landlords living in the county:	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
1900	74.0	68.6	73.8
1920	73.7	70.0	72.3

[1] Base on which percentages were calculated.

Figures are given in Table 16, for the areas studied in the different States in 1920, showing the extent to which the rented farms, the acreage in rented farms, and the value of rented farm real estate were owned by landlords who were not absentees. In preparing the table, farms owned by landlords who resided neither in the county nor in any of the adjoining counties, were considered to be the property of absentee owners.

TABLE 16.—*Farms, area, and value of rented farms, and percentages owned by persons resident in the county or in an adjoining county, in selected areas in eight North Central States, 1920*

State and section containing area studied	Size of study				Percentages owned by residents of county or an adjoining county		
	Counties	Farms	Area	Value	Farms	Acres	Value
	Number	*Number*	*1,000 acres*	*Million dollars*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio (western)	11	11,100	1,100	173	95.59	94.41	94.68
Illinois (northern)	11	12,200	1,900	453	91.51	90.51	90.48
Illinois (central)	10	16,300	2,700	839	88.56	87.08	88.05
Michigan (southern)	8	6,800	800	71	93.01	92.67	93.09
Wisconsin (southern)	6	5,200	700	100	95.53	94.72	95.19
Iowa (western)	7	7,800	1,500	420	85.35	83.27	84.77
Iowa (central)	11	11,200	1,800	483	90.45	89.31	89.53
North Dakota and South Dakota (eastern)	11	6,900	2,600	195	74.26	73.01	74.57
Kansas (central)	10	7,900	1,900	158	86.00	83.34	85.45
All areas studied	85	85,400	15,000	2,892	89.24	85.64	87.92

The extent to which 16,306 rented farms or parcels of rented farms in a compact group of 10 counties in central Illinois were owned by persons residing within the counties, within the area, in counties immediately surrounding the area, and in other counties in the country is shown in Figure 7. In the area, which could easily be traversed in good weather in a day by automobile, resided the owners of 85.7 per cent of the farms. The owners of 74.4 per cent of the farms lived in the same county as their land, and the owners of 88.6 per cent of the farms lived in the same county as their farm or in adjoining counties. In some other parts of the country, absenteeism is somewhat more common among farm landlords; but this central Illinois area can be considered representative of a considerable section of the northern part of the country, in which it is centrally located.

The relative amount of absenteeism in 1900 was greater in the Dakotas, Nebraska, and Kansas than in the other North Central

RESIDENCE OF LANDLORDS OF PARCELS OR RENTED FARMS
LOCATED IN 10 CENTRAL ILLINOIS COUNTIES, 1920
16,306 FARMS
15,252 FARMS OWNED BY RESIDENTS OF ILLINOIS
1,054 FARMS OWNED BY RESIDENTS ELSEWHERE
LOCATION OF FARMS IN 10 COUNTIES.
85.7% OF FARMS OWNED BY PEOPLE LIVING IN SAME AREA.
5% OF FARMS OWNED BY PEOPLE LIVING IN ADJACENT COUNTIES.
3.1% OF FARMS OWNED BY PEOPLE LIVING IN REMAINDER OF STATE.
16,306 FARMS
Figures in states represent the NUMBER of FARMS in the 10 counties of Illinois which are owned by people living in each state respectively.
16 Farms are owned by people living outside of the United States.

FIG 7.—Of 16,306 rented farms or parcels situated in a block of 10 counties in central Illinois 13,968 were owned by persons who lived in 1 of the 10 counties and 818 were owned by persons who lived in 1 of the 18 counties which immediately surrounded the 10 counties. Only 1,520 were owned by persons who lived more remote. Of this number, 294 were owned by persons resident in Chicago, and 156 by persons resident in California

States. Of the rented farms of South Dakota 41 per cent were owned by landlords resident out of county and 24.1 per cent by landlords resident out of State. In Wisconsin, by contrast, only 20.6 per cent of the rented farms were owned by landlords resident out of county and 4.5 per cent by landlords resident out of State (fig. 8).

Tabulations for the 85 counties indexed for ownership in 1920 revealed a range between counties in respect to the percentage of rented farms owned by landlords resident in the county or in an adjoining county of 62 for Kiowa, a Kansas county, to 98, for Montgomery, an Ohio county (fig. 9).

EXTENT TO WHICH OWNERS RESIDE WITHIN 3 MILES OF THEIR RENTED PROPERTY

Of the tenants reported in the questionnaire replies of landlords who owned rented farms in the North Central States, 42 per cent were farming on places which were within 3 miles of the residence of the

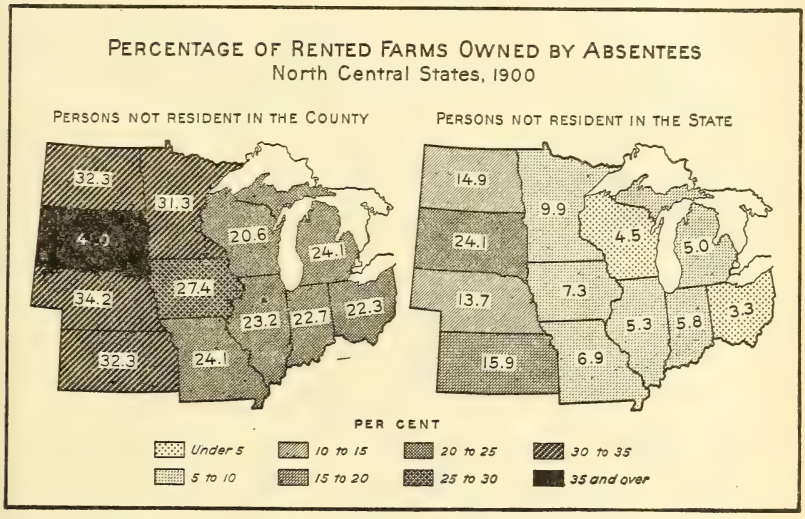

FIG. 8.—Measured by the percentage of rented farms owned by persons who did not reside in the same county absenteeism was most important in South Dakota. In Nebraska, Kansas, North Dakota, and Minnesota not far from a third of the rented farms were owned by landlords resident out of the county. Only 3.3 per cent of the Ohio rented farms were owned by persons resident out of the State as compared with 24.1 per cent for South Dakota

landlord. For the tenants of landlords who reported 1 tenant only the percentage was somewhat higher, 48. For tenants of landlords with 2 tenants it was 45 per cent; for tenants of landlords with 3 or 4 tenants it was 41 per cent; and for tenants of landlords with 5 farms or more it was 29 per cent.

Comparing different sections, it appears that only 29 per cent of the rented Dakota farms are within 3 miles of the owner's residence, whereas 60 per cent of the Ohio and 58 per cent of the Michigan farms are that close (Table 17). In the Illinois counties 42 and in the Iowa counties 37 per cent of the rented farms are within 3 miles of the owner's residence.

TABLE 17.—*Percentage of tenant farms within 3 miles of the owner's residence, selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Counties studied	Farms studied	Percentage of tenant farms within 3 miles of the owner's residence, classified by number of tenants				
			All tenants	1 tenant	2 tenants	3 or 4 tenants	5 or more tenants
	Number	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	11	2,150	60	58	66	58	52
Illinois, central and northern	21	8,491	42	48	43	39	32
Michigan, southern	8	1,285	58	58	59	62	35
Wisconsin, southern	6	1,040	49	51	51	45	36
Iowa, central and northwestern	18	5,458	37	43	41	39	21
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	11	2,081	29	37	32	33	15
Kansas, central	10	3,862	38	41	41	39	33
All areas studied	85	24,367	42	48	45	41	29

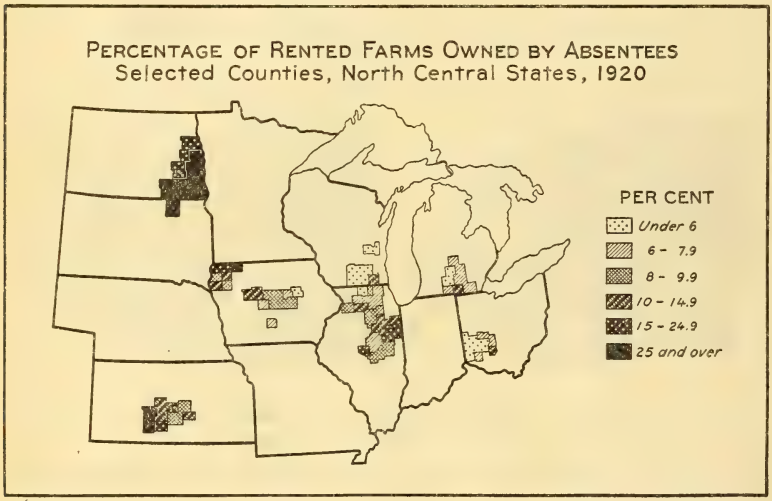

FIG. 9.—In 12 counties 25 per cent or more of the rented farms were owned by landlords resident neither in the county nor in any one of the adjoining counties. These 12 counties are among the more western of the 85 counties studied

SIZE OF RENTED FARMS OWNED BY ABSENTEES

On the whole, the rented farms owned by absentee owners are larger in total acreage and have a greater average value than rented farms owned by near-by residents. In 1900, for the North Central States as a whole, the average acreage in the farms rented to tenants by residents who lived in the same county was 120, whereas the farms of residents out of the State averaged 183 acres. The value of the farms of the corresponding classes of owners was $4,664 and $4,784. From this it would seem that the value per acre of the farms owned by the more remote landlords was considerably lower than for the farms owned by persons living near by. Absenteeism is of so much more importance, relatively, in sections of the North Central States where farms are large and of low value per acre that misleading conclusions

could easily be reached from figures for those States as a whole. In most counties apparently there is little difference in the value per acre of the farms owned by remote and by near-by landlords. Statistics by States for 1900 and for parts of States for 1920 show with a fair degree of consistency, however, that the near-by landlords have rented farms that average smaller in size and less in value per farm and more in value per acre than farms of remotely distant landlords (Table 18).

TABLE 18.—*Size and value of rented farms owned by near-by residents, as compared with farms of absentee owners, North Central States, 1900, and selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

1900					1920				
State	Size of farms of owners resident		Value of farms of owners resident		Location of area and number of counties studied	Size of farms of owners resident		Value of farms of owners resident	
	In county	Out of State	In county	Out of State		In county	Out of State	In county	Out of State
	Acres	*Acres*	*Dolls.*	*Dolls.*		*Acres*	*Acres*	*Dolls.*	*Dolls.*
Ohio	92	101	4, 142	4, 097	Ohio, (11 western)	95	102	15, 041	16, 092
Indiana	90	129	3, 870	4, 898	Illinois, (11 northern)	155	160	36, 566	35, 319
Illinois	119	131	7, 154	7, 198	Illinois, (10 central)	159	180	50, 682	54, 276
Michigan	95	102	3, 685	3, 274	Michigan, (8 southern)	116	111	10, 743	10, 985
Wisconsin	127	146	5, 665	5, 853	Wisconsin, (6 southern)	126	154	19, 146	21, 219
Minnesota	174	226	5, 166	5, 834	Iowa, (7 northwestern)	180	211	53, 637	57, 605
Iowa	139	183	6, 130	7, 007	Iowa, (11 central)	158	178	42, 810	46, 803
Missouri	85	127	2, 481	2, 876	North and South Dakota, (11 eastern).	377	404	29, 160	28, 259
North Dakota	335	405	5, 692	6, 623					
South Dakota	284	325	4, 360	4, 398					
Nebraska	162	242	4, 351	4, 561					
Kansas	148	207	3, 012	3, 316	Kansas, (10 central)	236	278	20, 037	21, 153
12 North Central States	120	183	4, 664	4, 784	All 85 counties studied	167	239	33, 200	35, 297

METHOD OF RENTING ADOPTED BY ABSENTEE LANDLORDS

Farms owned by landlords not resident in the county are more commonly rented for cash than are farms owned by residents of the county. The 1900 census showed that 32.3 per cent of the rented farms in the North Central States owned by landlords resident in the county were leased on a cash-rent basis, whereas of the farms owned by landlords resident in the State but out of the county 36.7 per cent were let for cash and of the farms owned by landlords resident out of the State 38.9 per cent were let for a cash rental. In North Dakota, a State in which share rent is very generally paid and where only 13.3 per cent of the farms owned by residents of the same county were rented for cash, 14.9 per cent of the farms owned by residents out of county and 16.2 per cent of the farms owned by residents out of the State were rented for cash. In Iowa, a State in which rented farms are more generally rented on a cash basis, 62.3 per cent of the farms owned by persons residing out of the State were rented for cash, whereas 59.1 per cent of the farms owned by out-of-the county residents and 54.2 per cent of the farms owned by residents within the county were rented for cash (fig. 10). In every one of the North Central States landlords resident out of the State owned a larger percentage of the cash than of the share rented farms.

LANDLORDS RESIDING ON FARMS

To the question, "Did you reside on a farm on January 1, 1920?" Fourteen thousand one hundred and eighty-eight landlords owning rented farms in the North Central States replied. The replies in the affirmative constituted 35 per cent of the total number, and a separation of the landlords on the basis of the proximity of their residence to the rented farm showed that about the same proporation of those who resided in the same county resided on a farm as was the case with landlords resident elsewhere. The replies would not indicate whether the landlord lived on a part of his land and some of the landlords who lived on farms may themselves have been tenants.

Of the landlords addressed as owning rented farms in Illinois only 28 per cent of those who replied indicated that they resided on farms, whereas 51 per cent of the Michigan landlords resided on farms. (Table 19.)

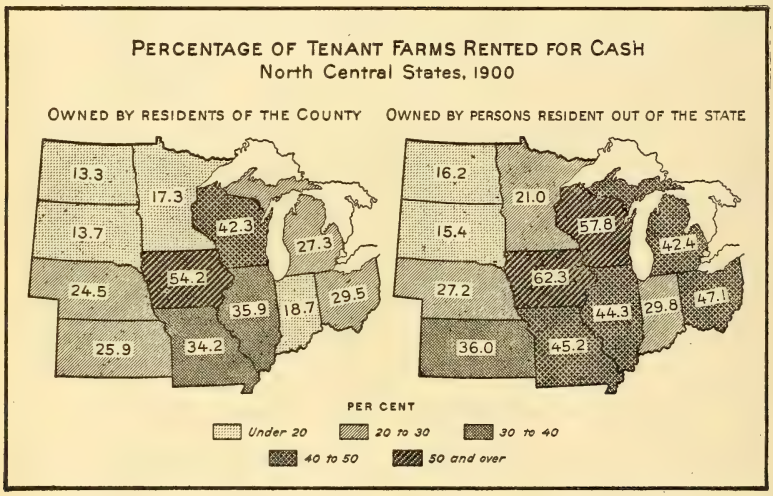

FIG. 10.—The farms of distant owners are more commonly rented for cash than the farms of near-by owners. The importance of cash renting is shown to vary considerably in the different States, but in every instance a larger proportion of the farms of out-of-State residents are cash rented than is the case with rented farms of owners resident within the county

TABLE 19.—*Residence of owners of rented farms, North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Owners replying on the question of residence	Percentage of owners residing		
		On a farm	In a town of—	
			Under 2,500	2,500 and over
	Number	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	1,508	37	32	31
Illinois, central and northern	4,967	28	41	31
Michigan, southern	1,110	51	3	46
Wisconsin, southern	779	40	3	57
Iowa, central and northwestern	3,014	29	47	24
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	1,122	49	4	47
Kansas, central	1,688	45	3	52
All areas studied	14,188	35	29	36

RESIDENCE OF OWNERS OF TRACTS RENTED TO PART OWNERS AND OF TRACTS OPERATED BY MANAGERS

In connection with the study of the census data of 1920, attention was given to the ownership of rented portions of some of the part-owner farms and to the ownership of some of the manager-operated farms. The number of part-owner farms studied with this point in mind was 7,986, the number of manager-operated farms 2,290. Of the tracts rented to part owners 67.9 per cent were owned by persons resident in the same county and 84.7 per cent by persons resident in the same county or in one of the adjoining counties. Of the farms operated by managers 76 per cent were owned by persons resident in the same county and 90.8 per cent by persons resident in the same or in adjoining counties.

In preceding pages it was stated that of the full tenant farms, the ownership of which was studied, 73.7 per cent were owned by landlords resident in the county and 89.2 per cent by landlords resident in the county or in one of the adjoining counties. From this it would seem that there is more absenteeism in the North Central States on the part of landlords who rent land to farmers than there is by landlords who have land operated by managers. Of the tracts rented to tenants a greater proportion of those rented to part owners are owned by absentee landlords than is true of tracts rented to farmers who own none of the land which they farm.

SCATTERED OWNERSHIP

Among the questions asked of owners of rented farms was one which read: "In how many counties is your land?" followed by another which asked: "In how many States?" The answers given would naturally apply to all land owned irrespective of whether it was operated by the owner himself, by laborers, managers, or tenants for the owner, or whether it was not farmed or used at all. It is therefore not inconsistent to find that some of the landlords who reported but one tenant were yet the owners of land in more than one county or State. About 1 per cent of the landlords who had one tenant owned land in more than one State, and about 3 per cent owned land in more than one county. Of landlords who had two or more tenants, a larger percentage owned land in more than one county or State. Of those landlords who reported five or more tenants, 27 per cent owned land in more than one State, and 64 per cent owned land in more than one county. (Table 20.)

TABLE 20.—*Percentage of owners of rented farms with land in more than one county or State, North Central States, 1920*

Tenants on land	Landlords reporting	Percentage of ownership classified by[1]—									
		Number of States in which land is owned				Number of counties in which land is owned					
		1 State	2 States	3 States	4–5 States	1 county	2 counties	3 counties	4 counties	5 counties	6 or more counties
	Number	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
1	8,505	99	1	(2)	0	97	3	(2)	(2)	(2)	0
2	1,937	94	5	1	0	94	5	1	(2)	(2)	(2)
3	664	90	8	2	0	65	25	8	2	(2)	(2)
4	275	84	13	3	0	50	29	13	6	2	0
5 or more	340	73	20	4	3	36	21	22	12	6	3
1 or more	11,721	97	3	(2)	(2)	90	7	2	1	(2)	(2)

[1] The replies tabulated refer to all land owned whether or not it was rented.
[2] Less than 0.5 per cent.

WOMEN OWNERS OF RENTED FARMS

Replies of 14,222 owners of rented farms in the North Central States in matters relating to ownership in 1920 indicated that 16.1 per cent of the owners were women. About a fifth of the Ohio and Michigan owners were women, whereas only 8 per cent of the owners of the Dakota farms were women. (Table 21.) Men owned an average of 374.6 acres and women 232 acres.[9]

TABLE 21.—*Women owners of rented farms, North Central States, 1920*

Location		Owners reporting sex	
State	Counties	Total	Women
		Number	*Per cent*
Ohio	11 western	1,513	19.8
Illinois	21 central and northern	4,992	17.7
Michigan	8 southern	1,110	20.2
Wisconsin	6 southern	779	16.6
Iowa	18 central and northwestern	3,018	11.6
North Dakota and South Dakota	11 eastern	1,122	8.0
Kansas	10 central	1,688	16.3
All areas studied	85	14,222	16.1

AGES OF OWNERS OF RENTED FARMS

The average age of 13,975 owners of rented farms was 59.5 years. Only 6 per cent were under 40 and 22 per cent were 70 years of age or over. As between landlords owning rented farms in the different States studied there is not much difference in average age (Table 22). The percentage of landlords who were 50 years of age or more was 78.5 for the Ohio area, 81.6 for the Illinois, 78.6 for the Michigan, 82.2 for the Wisconsin, 78.4 for the Iowa, 72.6 for the Dakotas, and 78.1 for the Kansas area.

[9] Further comparison of men and women owners of rented farms is made in connection with the sections of this bulletin which discuss the topics, age, occupation, and method of acquisition.

TABLE 22.—*Average age of owners of rented farms in the North Central States, January 1, 1920*

State	Counties	Landlords reporting age	Average age reported
		Number	*Years*
Ohio	11 western	1,476	59.52
Illinois	21 central and northern	4,896	60.52
Michigan	8 southern	1,094	59.40
Wisconsin	6 southern	766	60.64
Iowa	18 central and northwestern	2,975	59.07
North Dakota and South Dakota	11 eastern	1,107	56.26
Kansas	10 central	1,661	59.21
All areas studied	85	13,975	59.53

Women owners of rented farms reported an average age of 60.5 years, whereas men owners averaged 59.2 years. That ownership of rented farms by women is to be accounted for in many cases by the death of the husbands is suggested by the fact that the average age of women owners of rented farms is more than that of men owners. This is substantiated by tabulations of replies to questions asking how the land was acquired. (See Table 29.)

Male landlords without occupation averaged 66.2 years, whereas landlords who were still farming averaged only 53.9 years and the male landlords in other occupations averaged 54.2 years.

It is interesting to compare the ages of owners of rented farms with those of tenant farmers and farmers operating their own farms. The average age for the farm tenants of the North Central States was about 39 years in 1920, whereas the farmers operating their own farms averaged about 49 years, and owners of rented farms, as indicated by questionnaire replies, averaged 59.5 years. Among the farm tenants are most of the farmers who will some day be operating their own farms, and among the farmers operating their own farms are most of the owners who will some day be farm landlords. Some farmers, even among the tenant class, own farms which they rent to tenants. Of the farm tenants of the North Central States 48.4 per cent are under 35 years of age, whereas only 15.7 per cent of the farmers operating their own farms and only 2.8 per cent of the owners of rented farms are under that age. (Table 23.)

TABLE 23.—*Percentage distribution by age of farmers of selected tenure and of farm landlords, North Central States, 1920*

Age	Percentage distribution by age		
	Farm tenants [1]	Farm owner operators [1]	Farm landlords [2]
	Per cent	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Under 25 years	9.5	1.7	0.4
25 to 35 years	38.9	14.0	2.4
35 to 45 years	27.5	24.6	9.4
45 to 55 years	15.1	27.3	20.5
55 to 65 years	6.7	20.9	31.8
65 years and over	2.3	11.5	35.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] From Table 9, chap. 6, vol. 5, Fourteenth (1920) Census.
[2] From replies of 13,975 representative farm landlords owning rented farms in the North Central States.

More tenants are between the ages of 25 and 35 than between any other subsequent 10-year age limit, and of the two classes of tenants share tenants exceed cash tenants in the proportion who are between 25 and 35. Farmers operating mortgaged farms and farmers operating land a part of which they own and part of which they rent from others are relatively most numerous between the ages of 35 and 45. Farmers operating unmortgaged farms are relatively most numerous between the ages of 55 and 65, as are farm landlords, but farm landlords are older on the average than farmers operating unmortgaged farms (fig. 11).

For the purpose of ascertaining the ages at which farmers retire, those landlords who indicated by their answers to the questionnaire that they had once farmed for themselves were considered if their ages were 40 years or over. Relatively few of the retired landlords were under 40 (2.6 per cent), but it was considered desirable to

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED FARM TENURE CLASSES BY AGE, NORTH CENTRAL STATES, 1920

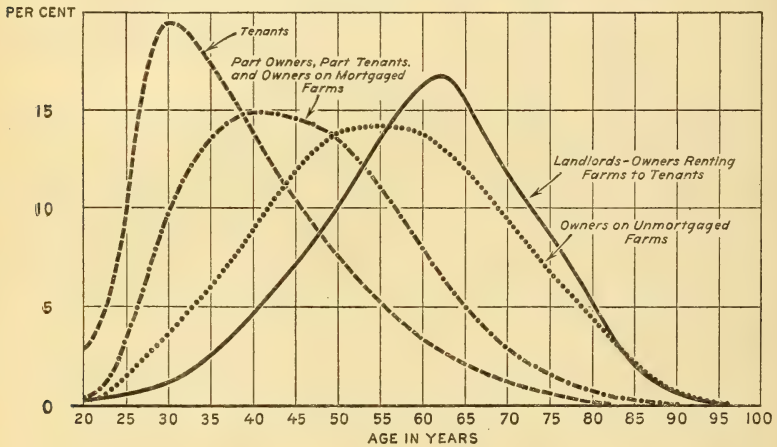
PER CENT
15
10
5
0
Tenants
Part Owners, Part Tenants, and Owners on Mortgaged Farms
Landlords-Owners Renting Farms to Tenants
Owners on Unmortgaged Farms
20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85 90 95 100
AGE IN YEARS

FIG. 11.—Ages reported most commonly by tenants were something like 10 years less than ages reported most commonly by farmers who were part owners, part tenants, or owners on mortgaged farms. Farm landlords reported ages between 60 and 65 more commonly than ages in any interval of equal period

eliminate even these in considering the question of age of retirement. An average age of 53.7 years at time of retirement from farming was shown by the answers of 5,591 male owners of rented farms who were over 40 years of age and who had farmed for themselves. The ages of these 5,591 landlords averaged 63.4 years, which indicates that they were somewhat older than other landlords, taken as a group. (Table 24.)

Evidently the owners of rented farms have, on the whole, but a short expectation of life. To most of them their rented farms represent the accumulations of their active lifetime. Few of them have not been farmers and a large proportion began farming as tenants. As years pass they acquired land, then more land, but it is probably subject to mortgage in most cases at first. Few find it possible to retire as farm landlords before their vital forces have begun to decline.

TABLE 24.—*Average age at which farm landlords of the North Central States retired from active farming for themselves*

State	Counties	Landlords averaged [1]	Average age	
			January 1, 1920	At retirement from farming
		Number	*Years*	*Years*
Ohio	11 western	481	63.7	53.8
Illinois	21 central and northern	2,118	63.9	52.9
Michigan	8 southern	370	61.7	52.5
Wisconsin	6 southern	315	63.5	55.2
Iowa	18 central and northwestern	1,307	63.5	54.7
North Dakota and South Dakota	11 eastern	400	61.0	53.9
Kansas	10 central	600	64.1	53.8
All areas studied	85	5,591	63.4	53.7

[1] Males of 40 or more years of age who reported themselves retired after having farmed for themselves.

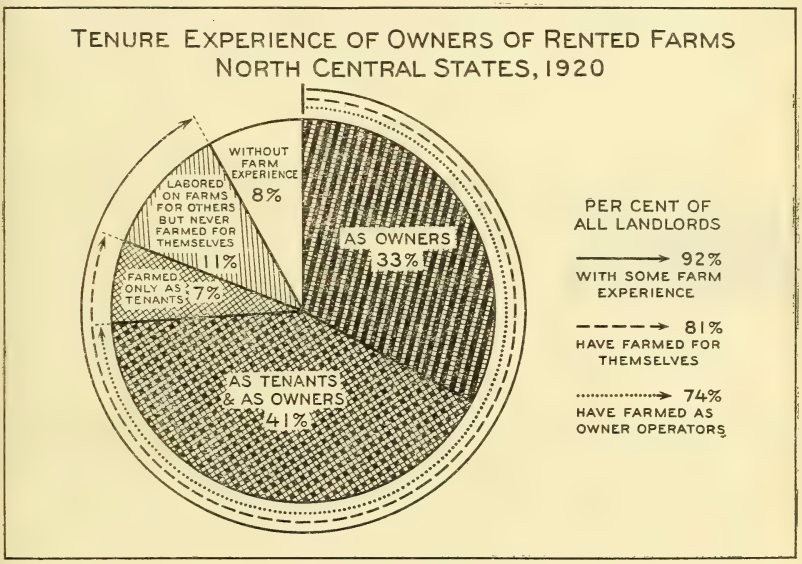
TENURE EXPERIENCE OF OWNERS OF RENTED FARMS
NORTH CENTRAL STATES, 1920
WITHOUT FARM EXPERIENCE 8%
LABORED ON FARMS FOR OTHERS BUT NEVER FARMED FOR THEMSELVES 11%
FARMED ONLY AS TENANTS 7%
AS OWNERS 33%
AS TENANTS & AS OWNERS 41%
PER CENT OF ALL LANDLORDS
92% WITH SOME FARM EXPERIENCE
81% HAVE FARMED FOR THEMSELVES
74% HAVE FARMED AS OWNER OPERATORS

FIG. 12.—Of a total of 11,930 men who owned rented farms in the North Central States only 8 per cent were without farm experience and 81 per cent had farmed for themselves either as tenants or as owners or both as tenants and as owners

FARM EXPERIENCE OF LANDLORDS

The fitness of the majority of the owners of rented farms to act as farm landlords and to give the necessary advice and supervision to their tenants is shown not only by their maturity in age but by their farming experience as well. Only 16.1 per cent of the owners of rented farms who returned the questionnaires were women. Of the men who reported their experience or lack of experience in farming, only 7.7 per cent had evidently never worked on farms, while 81 per cent had operated farms for themselves either as tenants or as owner farmers (fig. 12).

Seventy-four per cent of the landlords (male) had farmed places as owners, 48 per cent had farmed as tenants, 41 per cent had farmed both as tenants and as owners, evidently first as tenants and later as owners in a majority of cases.

The landlords who farmed for themselves may be divided into the two groups, those who reported themselves as still farming and those who no longer farmed. Of those who had farmed only as tenants 34 per cent continued to farm; of those who had farmed both as tenants and as owners 28 per cent continued to farm; of those who had farmed only as owners 21 per cent continued to farm. From this it seems evident that some of the landlords who reported experience only as tenants will have operated farms of their own before they stop farming altogether. Of the landlords who were farming at the time they answered the questionnaire, 11 per cent had farmed only as tenants, whereas 7 per cent of the landlords who had ceased to farm had farmed only as tenants.

Of the landlords giving their experience or lack of experience as farmers 20.5 per cent were farming for themselves when they replied to the questionnaire. A greater percentage were farming in the

OCCUPATIONS OF MALE OWNERS OF RENTED FARMS, NORTH CENTRAL STATES, 1920

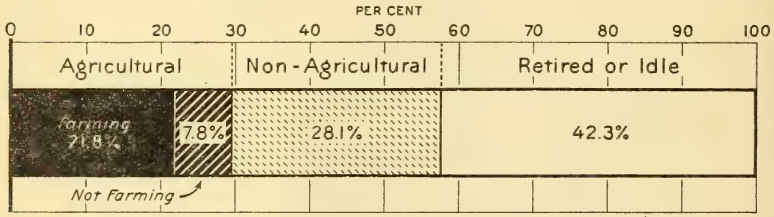

FIG. 13.—Replies of 11,770 men who owned rented farms in the North Central States in 1920 indicate that 42.3 per cent had no occupation except that of landlord

Kansas, Iowa, and Michigan areas than in the Wisconsin, Illinois, and Dakota areas. The Ohio landlords are lowest in respect to the percentage with farm experience, whereas the Iowa, Michigan, and Illinois landlords lead in this regard. (Table 25.)

TABLE 25.—*Farm experience of owners of rented farms, selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Total men owners reporting experience	Percentage distribution by kind of experience				
		None	Helper not farmer	Farmer now retired	Farmer still farming	Total studied
	Number	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	1,213	13.1	13.8	52.8	20.3	100
Illinois, central and northern	4,068	6.9	9.6	64.5	19.0	100
Michigan, southern	886	6.7	13.5	58.2	21.6	100
Wisconsin, southern	650	10.0	13.1	58.3	18.6	100
Iowa, central and northwestern	2,668	6.3	10.3	61.6	21.8	100
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	1,032	8.2	14.4	57.8	19.6	100
Kansas, central	1,413	7.5	11.1	58.0	23.4	100
All areas studied	11,930	7.7	11.3	60.5	20.5	100

OCCUPATIONS OF OWNERS OF RENTED FARMS

Considering the age reported by owners of rented farms it is not surprising that a large proportion, 42.3 per cent of the males, indicated that they were sick, idle, definitely retired from work, or otherwise without occupation. However, another large group, 21.8 per cent of the males, were still farming for themselves (fig. 13 and Table 26).

TABLE 26.—*Occupation of owners of rented farms, North Central States, 1920* [1]

Occupation	Number per thousand reporting occupation	
	Men	Women
	Number	*Number*
Retired or idle	423	257
Housekeepers	0	631
Agricultural:		
Farmers	218	54
Other agricultural	78	15
Nonagricultural:		
Business	150	13
Professional	55	23
Public service	21	1
Laborers	55	6
Total	1,000	1,000

[1] The figures given are based on the replies of 11,770 men and 2,178 women owners of rented farms in 85 counties studied.

Comparatively little difference is shown in the various parts of the North Central States, as studied, in the percentage of owners who reported farming as their occupation. The lowest percentage was found to be for Illinois, 19.5, the highest percentage for Kansas, 25.6. Comparing the landlords replying from the different areas on the question of their having no occupation or having retired, it was found that 46 to 48 per cent of the landlords of Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa had retired from work or were idle or sick, whereas only 27 per cent of the Michigan, 33 per cent of the Ohio, and 34 per cent of the Dakota landlords reported no occupation (Table 27).

TABLE 27.—*Occupational status of farm landlords (males), selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

State containing land	Males reporting occupational status					
	Total	Farming	In other agricultural occupations	Retired, sick, or idle	In nonagricultural occupations	Total
	Number	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	1,189	22.6	10.0	33.0	34.4	100
Illinois, central and northern	4,021	19.5	8.9	47.9	23.7	100
Michigan, southern	868	24.1	10.3	27.4	38.2	100
Wisconsin, southern	647	21.3	3.9	48.1	26.7	100
Iowa, central and northwestern	2,636	22.8	5.5	46.3	25.4	100
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	1,021	20.9	7.8	34.4	36.9	100
Kansas, central	1,388	25.6	7.1	38.8	28.5	100
All areas studied	11,770	21.8	7.8	42.3	28.1	100

Dividing the landlords of known occupational status into three groups—those reporting 1 tenant, those with 2 tenants, and those with 3 tenants or more—it was found that about the same proportion of each group gave their occupation as farming, but of the farmer landlords proportionately more of those with 1 or 2 tenants apparently were tenant farmers themselves than was the case with landlords with 3 or more tenants. This is shown by a separation of the landlords who farmed into two groups, those withholding a part of their acreage and those renting it all. Of the farmer landlords with 1 tenant 36.7 per cent rented all of their land to the tenant, of the farmer landlords with 2 tenants 32.2 per cent rented all of their land to their 2 tenants, whereas of those with 3 or more tenants only 19.6 per cent rented to their tenants all of the land which they owned.

Proportionately more of the landlords with 3 or more tenants were bankers and proportionately less had laboring occupations than was the case with landlords with either 1 or 2 tenants. Housekeeping was given as the occupation of 63.1 per cent of the women who owned rented farms and who gave their occupational status, and an additional 25.7 per cent reported themselves as idle, sick, retired, or otherwise unoccupied.

To ascertain the extent to which owner operators are the landlords of rented farms in the county in which they farm, the names of owner farmers in 14 counties, distributed in six of the North Central States, were compared with the names of owners of tenant and manager-operated farms in those counties. Of a total of 13,068 landlords owning and living in the 14 counties studied 1,596 or 12.2 per cent were evidently operating one of the farms which they owned, renting the other farm or farms to tenants, or hiring managers. These 1,596 landlord-owner operators owned 12.6 per cent of the farms rented to tenants, 18.4 per cent of the tracts rented to part owners, 11.2 per cent of the farms operated by managers, and 7.3 per cent of the owner-operated farms in the 14 counties studied. A small percentage of the other owner farmers probably owned rented farms elsewhere than in the county in which they farmed, and a small percentage of the tenant farmers probably were the owners of rented farms (Table 28).

TABLE 28.—*Percentage of rented farms of landlords resident in the county held by landlords farming as owner operators in the county, average of 14 counties in the North Central States, 1920* [1]

Class of landlords	Landlords	Rented or manager operated farms or tracts owned		Percentage held of farms or parcels of farms		
		Total	Average	Tenant operated	Part-owner operated	Manager operated
	Number	*Number*	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Farming as owner-operators in the county	1,596	[2] 2,188	1.37	12.6	18.4	11.2
Not farming as owner-operators in the county	11,472	13,657	1.19	87.4	81.6	88.8
Total studied	13,068	15,845	1.21	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] The names of the counties studied follow with the percentage of tenant or manager-operated farms held by landlords themselves owner-operator farmers in the county: Madison, Ohio, 12.4; Miami, Ohio, 11.4; Clinton, Mich., 11.8; Lenawee, Mich., 10.1; Walworth, Wis., 5.1; DeKalb, Ill., 5.4; Kankakee, Ill., 8.5; Logan, Ill., 9.5; Black Hawk, Iowa, 6.8; Calhoun, Iowa, 10.4; Plymouth, Iowa, 8.9; Warren, Iowa, 13.4; McPherson, Kans., 14.6; Reno, Kans., 14.0.

[2] In addition each of the 1,596 landlords owned the farm which he operated in person.

HOW OWNERSHIP WAS ACQUIRED

Usable answers to questions relating to the ways in which land owned in 1920 was acquired were tabulated for 14,174 owners of rented land. The questions asked follow: Of the land to which you held title January 1, 1920, how many acres had been acquired by you in each of the following ways: (a) By homesteading? ------; (b) by marriage? ------; (c) by inheritance or gift? ------; (d) by purchase, trade, or foreclosure? ------; (e) otherwise? ------. In the discussion which follows, inheritance and gift are treated under the heading "inheritance," and purchase, trade, and foreclosure under the heading "purchase."

It is not possible to tell to what extent acreages which widows indicated they had acquired by marriage were really acquired as a result of joint savings while the husband was alive. The replies do not reveal the value of the acreage held, the extent to which it was mortgaged, or the extent to which it had been bought with wealth originally acquired by inheritance, gift, marriage, or homesteading but converted into money or other property through trade or sale.[10]

Of the owners replying, 64 per cent indicated that they had purchased all their land, 11 per cent had inherited it all, 15 per cent had inherited part and purchased the rest, and 2 per cent had acquired a part by purchase and the rest by marriage. In the acquisition of the acreage owned, purchase had been a factor with 85 per cent of the owners, inheritance with 27 per cent, marriage with 6 per cent, and homesteading with 5 per cent.

Of the acreage owned 81.2 per cent was purchased and 14 per cent was inherited while the rest was acquired by marriage and homesteading in about equal amounts.

Of the owners replying concerning manner of acquisition 11,905 were men and 2,269 were women. The men had acquired eight times as much by purchase as by inheritance. The women had purchased less than they inherited. Thus of the acreage owned by men 85.7 per cent had been purchased, 10.5 per cent inherited, and 1.4 per cent acquired by marriage. Of the acreage owned by women 42.5 per cent had been purchased, 44 per cent inherited, and 10.7 per cent acquired by marriage (fig. 14). Only 52 per cent of the women had purchased any of their land whereas 91 per cent of the men had purchased a part or all of their land. (Table 29.)

Although according to the inheritance laws and customs of this country brothers and sisters participate equally, women are more likely to take their share in any settlement in the form of money, bonds, or mortgages, whereas men are likely to take over the land, giving, where necessary, a mortgage to the female heirs so as to adjust matters. Moreover, after settlement, men are more likely to retain inherited farm property than are women other than wives of farmers.

[10] Apparently a few of those who replied are not familiar with the word "homesteading" and took it to mean the farm on which they were raised in the sense of the expression "the old homestead," whereas it was desired that land tabulated as homesteaded should be that acquired directly from the Government in accordance with methods permitted by the homestead laws. To the extent to which misunderstanding in this matter occurred it is probable that the acreage listed as homesteaded is too large and the acreage listed as inherited is too small. However, misunderstanding of the questions asked probably does not materially affect the tabulations.

TABLE 29.—*How the land held by owners of rented farms was acquired, selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

Location		Owners reporting		Percentage of owners acquiring land through									
				Purchase			Inheritance			Marriage		Homesteading	
State	Counties	Total	Average acres owned	Part	Whole	Percentage of total acreage owned	Part	Whole	Percentage of total acreage owned	Part	Percentage of total acreage owned	Part	Percentage of total acreage owned
	No.	*No.*	*No.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*	*P. ct.*
Ohio, western	11	1,513	170	82	60	69	33	15	26	7	4	1	1
Illinois, central and northern	21	4,983	311	82	57	75	37	15	21	7	3	1	1
Michigan, southern	8	1,110	147	81	60	72	31	14	22	9	5	1	1
Wisconsin, southern	6	779	192	84	71	82	23	11	14	6	3	1	1
Iowa, central and northwestern	18	3,018	364	91	77	88	18	6	10	4	2	2	(1)
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	11	1,104	680	91	61	84	12	3	7	4	2	26	7
Kansas, central	10	1,667	610	86	61	85	20	8	9	5	1	17	5
All areas studied	85	14,174	339	85	64	81	27	11	14	6	3	5	2
Men	85	11,905	375	91	69	86	24	7	11	4	1	5	2
Women	85	2,269	232	52	37	42	47	34	44	15	11	4	3

[1] Less than one-half of 1 per cent.

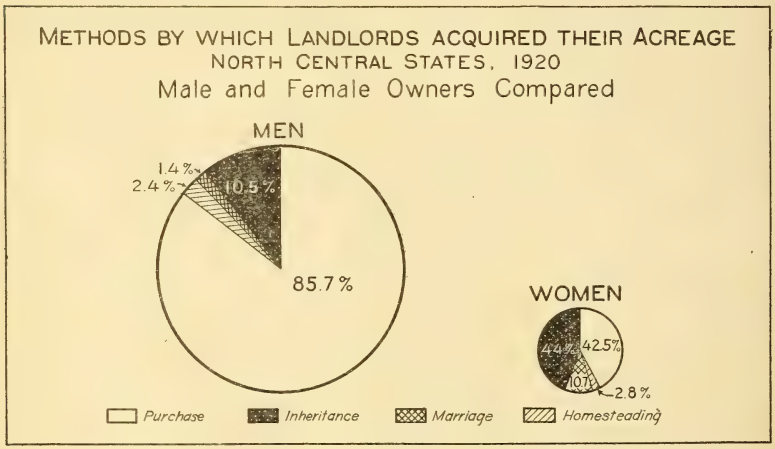

FIG. 14.—The areas of the circles are proportionate to the acreages reported. Men owners had purchased about six-sevenths of their land as compared with about three-sevenths for women owners. The inherited acreage owned by women owners of rented farms was about that owned by men owners of rented farms, but this inherited acreage represents a much greater proportion of the entire acreage owned in the case of women than in the case of men

Inheritance was not so much a factor in acquisition of acreage in Iowa, the Dakotas, and Kansas as in Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan. Homesteading had been a factor of more importance to landlords owning in the Dakotas and Kansas than it was to landlords owning in the other areas which were studied. Purchase had been a factor accounting for at least a part of the land acquired by over eight-

tenths of the landlords in every area and with over nine-tenths of the Iowa and Dakota landlords.

Owners who inherited all of their land rented a larger proportion of it to tenants than did owners who purchased all of their acreage. Of the owners who acquired their land altogether by inheritance, 88 per cent rented all of it to tenants, whereas 78 per cent of the owners who acquired their land entirely by purchase rented all of it to tenants. (Table 30.)

TABLE 30.—*Mode of acquisition in relation to the proportion of owned acreage rented to tenants, landlords owning rented farms, eight North Central States, 1920*

Method of acquisition	Owners reporting		Acreage rented to tenants			Owners who rented all their land to tenants
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	
	Number	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Purchase exclusively	8,165	839	86.7	85.8	96.0	77.9
Inheritance exclusively	777	767	92.8	90.2	95.4	87.9

KINSHIP OF LANDLORDS AND TENANTS

To the extent that farm tenants are the kinsmen of those from whom they rent it is necessary to modify the usual impressions on the question of the character of farm tenancy. Up to this time relatively little statistical information has been available on the extent to which farm tenants rent from men to whom they are related by blood or marriage. On this question, 14,222 landlords of rented farms made answer. Of these landlords 56 per cent reported that none of their tenants were kinsmen. Kinsmen of the other landlords rented 34 per cent of the 25,606 rented farms owned by the 14,222 landlords who reported on the question of kinship. Sons or sons-in-law occupied 29 per cent of the farms owned and they constituted 85 per cent of the tenants related to landlords. (Table 31.)

If these percentages may be used as representative of conditions throughout the North Central States, where, in 1920, 31.1 per cent of the farmers were reported to be tenants, it would appear that only 20.5 per cent of the farmers were tenants unrelated to their landlords by blood or marriage, and only 22.1 per cent were tenants who were not sons or sons-in-law of their landlords.

Of the North Central States, there is the least tenancy in Wisconsin and Michigan, and apparently in those States many of the tenants are related to their landlords. From the replies of landlords owning in the Wisconsin area it would appear that 42 per cent of the farm tenants are related to their landlords. This is interesting in view of the fact that in 1920 only 14.4 per cent of the farmers of Wisconsin were tenants. In Michigan 17.7 per cent of the farmers were tenants in 1920, and landlords owning in Michigan indicated by their replies that 36 per cent of the tenants are related to them. In Illinois where 42.7 per cent of the farmers were tenants in 1920 it appears from replies of owners of rented farms in that State that 37 per cent of the tenants are relatives of the landlords (fig. 15).

TABLE 31.—*Extent to which farm tenants are related to their landlords, selected areas, North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Landlords reporting			Percentage of rented farms occupied by		Percentage of tenants of kin who were sons or sons-in-law
	Landlords	Rented farms owned	Percentage of landlords without any tenants of kin	Tenants of kin	Sons or sons-in-law	
	Number	*Number*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	1,513	2,268	64	29	24	82
Illinois, central and northern	4,992	8,895	55	37	31	84
Michigan, southern	1,110	1,425	59	36	30	85
Wisconsin, southern	779	1,060	53	42	37	88
Iowa, central and northern	3,018	5,734	52	36	32	89
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	1,122	2,234	64	25	20	81
Kansas, central	1,688	3,990	53	31	24	79
All areas studied	14,222	25,606	56	34	29	85

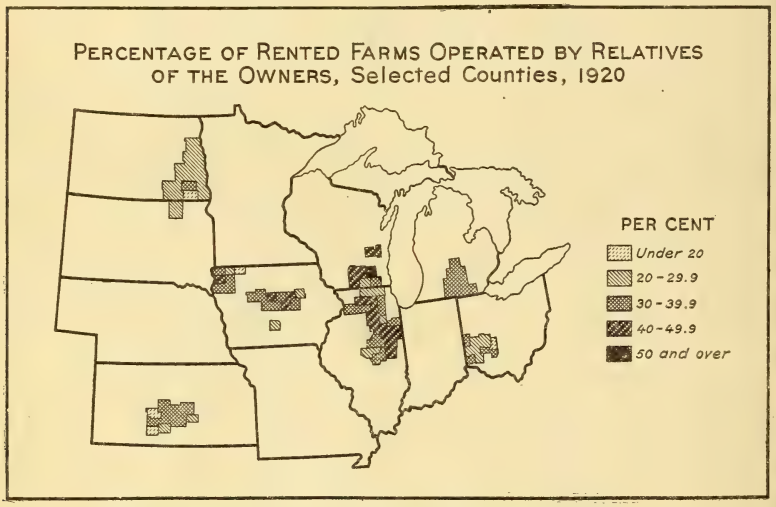

FIG. 15.—Of the 85 counties studied, in only 1, a Wisconsin county, were as many as half of the farm tenants reported to be renting from relatives. In 3 of the other Wisconsin counties studied, in 7 of the 21 Illinois counties, and 4 of the 18 Iowa counties between 40 and 49.9 per cent of the tenants rented from relatives

SUPERVISION GIVEN BY OWNERS TO TENANTS

Owners of rented farms to whom questionnaires were sent were asked to answer the following questions bearing on the subject of advice and supervision given tenants: Give number of tenants _____. How many of your tenants in 1920 carried on their farming operations with practically no advice or supervision from you, your agents, or overseers? _____. Landlords to the number of 13,235 owning rented farms in the North Central States gave replies on these questions which could be tabulated. (Table 32.)

It is obvious that only a rough indication of the extent to which tenant farmers are given advice or supervision can be obtained from such a question. What one landlord might call advice or supervision another might not. Nor do the answers requested make it possible to gauge in any way the need of the advice or supervision given or withheld, its value, how much or on what subject it was given, or the extent to which it was followed.

TABLE 32.—*Farm landlords giving their tenants advice or supervision, North Central States, 1920*

Amount of advice or supervision	Landlords reporting	Landlords grouped by number of tenants							
		All landlords	1 tenant	2 tenants	3 tenants	4 tenants	5–9 tenants	10–19 tenants	20 or more tenants
	Number	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
No advice or supervision given any tenant	8,554	57.1	60.8	54.6	51.4	47.8	40.7	36.5	42.8
All tenants given advice or supervision	4,159	39.0	39.2	37.5	38.9	38.3	44.3	43.2	42.9
Part but not all tenants given advice or supervision	522	3.9	0	7.9	9.7	13.9	15.0	20.3	14.3
Totals	13,235	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The 13,235 landlords who answered the question relating to supervision had 24,011 tenants. (Table 33.) Of these 44.1 per cent were given some advice or supervision. Supervision is given more commonly where tenants rent from landlords with many tenants and less commonly where landlords have but one tenant. Tenants of landlords who had but 1 tenant received supervision or advice in 39.2 per cent of the cases; whereas 44.4 per cent of the tenants of landlords with 2, 3, or 4, and 52.2 per cent of the tenants of landlords with 5 or more tenants, were given advice or supervision.

Comparing reports from the different States it appears that tenants of Ohio and Wisconsin landlords are given supervision or advice in a greater proportion of cases than tenants of landlords owning in the other States studied, Iowa and Kansas tenants getting supervision or advice in the smallest proportion of cases.

In Wisconsin, the State in which the highest proportion of tenants were shown to be relatives of the landlords, 58.6 per cent of the tenants were given advice or supervision. One would expect supervision to be given to a greater proportion of share tenants than of cash tenants. The reports from Iowa and North Dakota landlords bear out such an assumption. Iowa is conspicuous for the amount of cash renting and North Dakota is notable for the extent to which rented farms are worked on shares. Of the tenants of Iowa landlords 37.8 per cent were given advice or supervision, and 50.3 per cent of the tenants of landlords owning in the North Dakota and South Dakota counties studied were given supervision.

TABLE 33.—*Percentage of farm tenants given some supervision or advice by their landlord or his agent or overseer, selected areas in the North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Tenants studied	Percentage of tenants given some advice or supervision classified by number of tenants renting from each landlord			
		All tenants	1 tenant	2, 3, or 4 tenants	5 or more tenants
	Number	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	2,179	57.0	48.7	60.3	81.3
Illinois, central and northern	8,358	44.8	38.7	45.0	57.0
Michigan, southern	1,350	45.6	44.4	48.8	[1] 35.2
Wisconsin, southern	1,043	58.6	52.8	62.0	[1] 94.3
Iowa, central and northwestern	5,505	37.8	29.4	38.7	47.8
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	2,065	50.3	40.6	49.9	60.9
Kansas, central	3,511	36.0	29.2	35.8	39.9
All areas studied	24,011	44.1	39.2	44.4	52.2

[1] Percentage based on the replies of less than 10 landlords.

TENDENCY TOWARD SOIL DEPLETION ON RENTED FARMS

Fertility of the soil is decreasing on the farms operated by 21 per cent of the tenants of rented farms in the North Central States. In the opinion of the landlords, their other tenants so farm that the fertility is maintained if not increased. The answers to the following questions furnished the information tabulated: Give number of tenants _____. In your opinion (a) how many of your tenants so farmed in 1920 as to maintain or increase the fertility of the land? _____ (b) how many so as to decrease the fertility? _____.

Judging from the replies of the owners of the land, the fertility of the land is not so well maintained by tenants farming for owners who have many farms as it is for owners having 1 or a few farms. Only 15 per cent of the tenants farming for owners who had 1 rented farm were deemed to be so farming that the fertility was declining, whereas 20 per cent of the tenants of landlords with 2, 3, or 4 tenants were causing the fertility to decline, and 37 per cent of the tenants of landlords with 5 or more tenants were running the land down. Owners of rented farms in Ohio, Illinois, and Wisconsin were more optimistic about the fertility of their farms than were the owners of rented farms in the Dakota and Kansas areas who answered the questionnaire. (Table 34.)

TABLE 34.—*Tendency toward soil depletion on rented farms, selected areas of the North Central States, 1920*

State and section	Counties	Landlords replying			Percentage of rented farms decreasing in fertility, classified by number of rented farms owned			
		Landlords	Rented farms owned	Land owned	Total farms	1 farm	2, 3, or 4 farms	5 or more farms
	Number	*Number*	*Number*	*1,000 acres*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*	*Per cent*
Ohio, western	11	1,465	2,208	250	16	12	17	26
Illinois, central and northern	21	4,789	8,563	1,500	15	12	13	23
Michigan, southern	8	1,059	1,357	158	22	21	22	27
Wisconsin, southern	6	771	1,050	149	13	11	16	13
Iowa, central and northwestern	18	2,890	5,590	1,063	21	13	18	38
North Dakota and South Dakota, eastern	11	1,049	2,140	729	32	21	34	38
Kansas, central	10	1,551	3,355	977	36	25	30	60
All acreas studied	85	13,574	24,263	4,826	21	15	20	37

CHILDREN OF FARM LANDLORDS

Under the laws and customs governing inheritance in the United States the holdings of owners with many children tend to be broken up. In connection with the extent to which leveling processes may be relied upon to do away with inequalities of opportunity, it is important to know something about the size of the families of farm landlords, especially of landlords with more than one or two rented farms.

Replies were received from 14,214 owners of rented farms to a question concerning the number of living children. These owners had an average of 3.2 children, but about one-sixth had no children. Those who had children had an average of 3.8 living children [11] (figs. 16 and 17).

Children of those landlords with 5 or more rented farms have a good chance of inheriting at least one rented farm, but the number of such children is relatively small. Seventy per cent of the owners

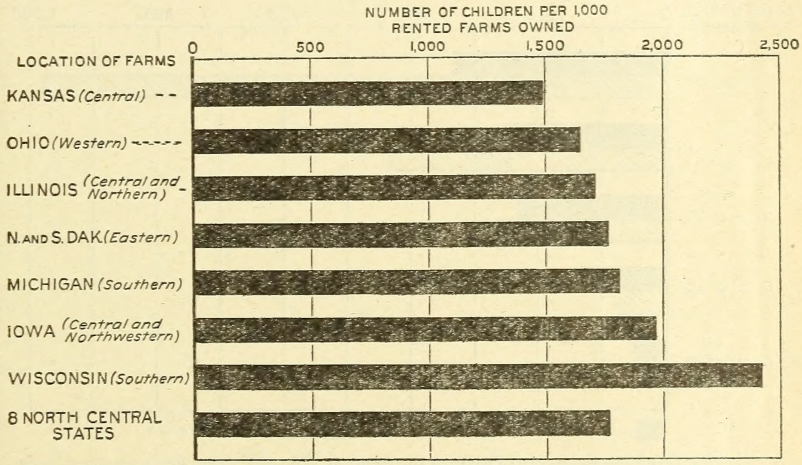

FIG. 16.—Considering the chances of the children of farm landlords to inherit a farm, it appears from replies of the parents, that on the average there were 1,771 children for every 1,000 rented farms belonging to the parents

of rented farms have more than one child. This fact, together with the comparatively small number of rented farms owned by persons who own more than two rented farms, and the American custom of dividing the property equally among the children at the death of the parents, will assist materially in preventing the retention of large holdings of rented land.

SUMMARY

About a twenty-fifth of the rented farms in the North Central States are owned by landlords who own five or more farms. Landlords who own 1,000 or more rented acres each, together own about one-tenth of the acreage that is rented to farm tenants. In 1920 landlords who owned $250,000 worth or more of rented farm property owned about 8 per cent of the value of farm land and buildings rented to tenants.

Concentration of ownership changed little in the 20 years from 1900 to 1920 as measured by number of rented farms owned. In

[11] Of the landlords replying 17 per cent had no children, 13.1 per cent had 1 child, 16.9 per cent had 2 children, 40.4 per cent had 3, 4, 5, or 6 children and 12.6 per cent had 7 children or more. A total of 45,321 children and 25,590 tenants was reported by the 14,214 landlords.

1900 landlords resident in the North Central States, who had one or two rented farms, owned 87.4 per cent of the rented farms. In 1920, 88.7 per cent of the rented farms in 85 representative counties were owned by landlords who owned one or two rented farms.

The degree to which rented farms were owned by landlords resident out of the county showed practically no change between 1900 and 1920. Therefore, considering the greater development of the automobile and improved roads, absenteeism is probably a smaller problem than it was in 1900 when the owners of 74 per cent of the rented farms in these States lived in the county in which the land was located. In 1920, 73.7 per cent of the rented farms were owned by landlords who lived in the same county and 89.2 per cent were owned by landlords who lived in the same county or in adjoining counties. Two-fifths of the rented farms were within 3 miles of the home of the owner.

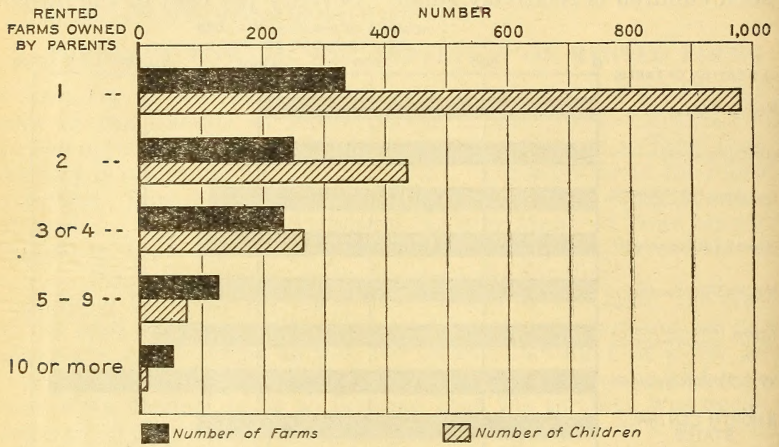

FIG. 17.—The figure shows the distribution of the ownership of 1,000 rented farms among owners with 1, 2, 3 or 4, 5 to 9, or 10 or more rented farms. The number of children of each group of owners is shown in connection with the number of rented farms owned. Few of the children of farm landlords may hope to inherit a farm apiece

Owners of rented farms are usually men well along in years, who have had considerable farm experience, many of them being retired farmers. The average age was close to 60 years. Of the male owners less than a tenth had had no experience on farms. A large proportion had been tenants on farms in earlier years.

Seventy per cent of the owners of rented farms have more than one child. This fact, together with the comparatively small number of rented farms owned by persons who own more than two rented farms, and the American custom of dividing the property equally among the children at the death of the parents, will assist materially in preventing the creation of large holdings of rented land.

Many of the children of farm landlords, pending the time when they may inherit the land or an interest in it, rent from their parents. Over a third of the tenants were reported to be related to the person from whom they rented, 29 per cent of the tenants being sons or sons-in-law. Present owners of the land acquired only about one-seventh of their acreage by inheritance. They purchased an average of four-fifths of it.